BUILDING

in a Time of

GLOBAL

Accelerating

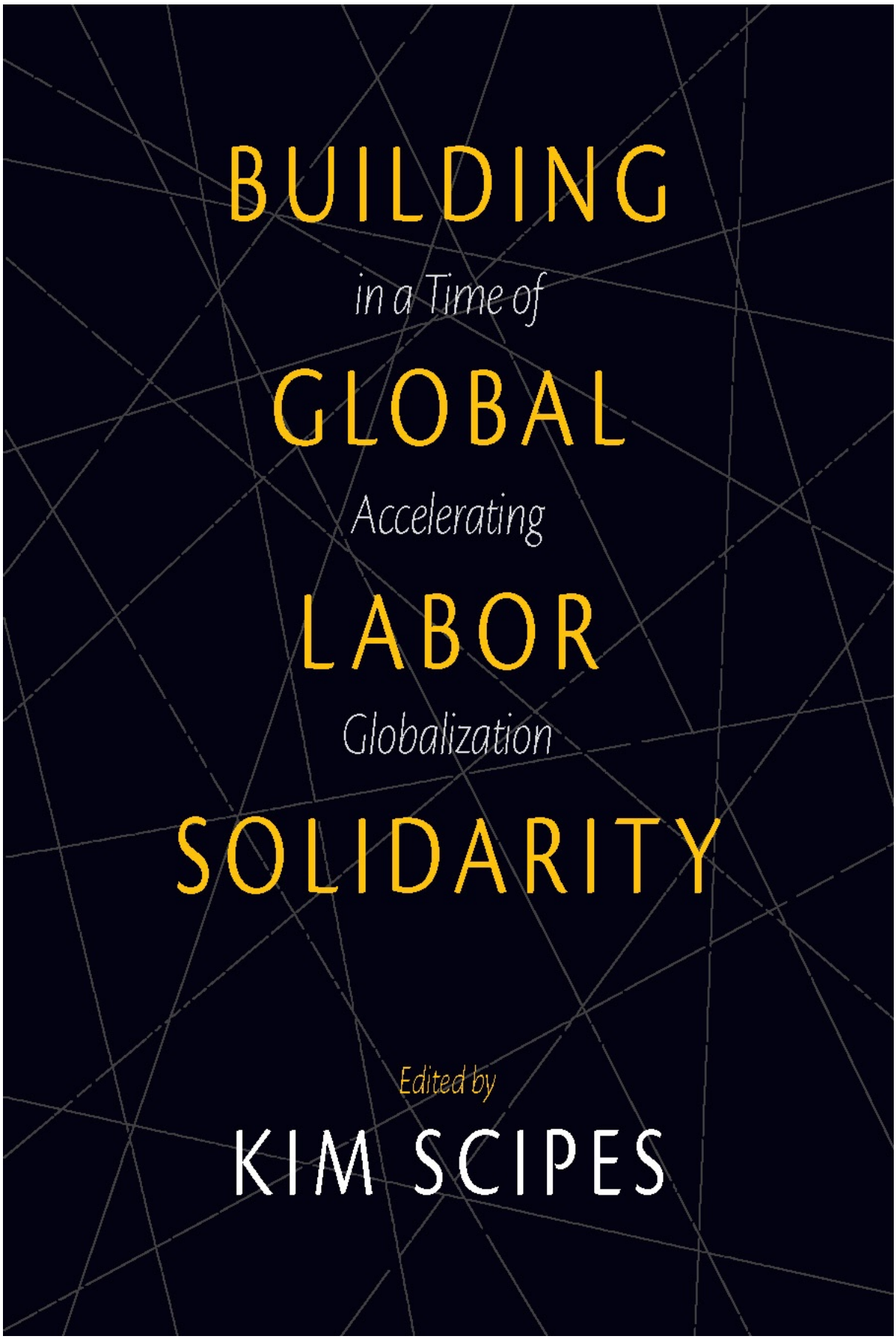
LABOR

Globalization

SOLIDARITY

Edited by

KIM SCIPES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Building Global Labor Solidarity
in a Time of Accelerating Globalization

Edited by Kim Scipes

With contributions by
David Bacon
Bruno Dobrusin
Jenny Jungehülsing
Katherine Nastovski
Timothy Ryan
Kim Scipes
Michael Zweig

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To the labor activists and scholars around the world
who have been working and continue to work for a
better world through building global labor solidarity

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PREFACE

Labor, which had been a social and economic powerhouse from the late 1940s to early 1970s in the United States and most other so-called developed countries, has been under almost continual assault since the 1980s. Today, while still powerful, it is a shadow of what it used to be.

A growing number of local officers, union staff members, and activists are trying to address the serious problems that underlie labor's eroding power. There is a growing recognition that unions in developed countries are not able to address the problems they face alone, especially when faced by corporations from the United States and from around the world with global production operations.

Concurrently, there are a number of people in developed countries who are becoming more and more aware of the so-called developing countries and their peoples. They see workers struggling against multinational and domestic corporations whose existence is predicated on exploiting workers terribly—especially young women workers. These activists seek to join these workers in common campaigns against these multinational exploiters, often looking for ways to utilize developed-country consumer power to support workers' efforts to unionize and to live better lives.

And at the same time, workers and peasants in these developing countries are facing extreme exploitation and terrible oppression, with oftentimes serious repression by the elites and governments in these countries. Faced with deep poverty, and with not much of a future if the status quo holds, a growing number have been organizing collectively into trade unions, creating new labor centers and vibrant labor movements. As I wrote in the preface of my 1996 book on the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) Labor Center of the Philippines,

> Workers and peasants in "Third World" countries often lead lives of great poverty and extreme helplessness—and face severe repression should they challenge their fate. Access to education and health care is limited. Poverty is ever present. Malnutrition is more frequently the rule rather than the exception. Death, often accompanied by painful suffering, comes at an early age.
>
> Unfortunately, these familiar images are presented again and again to us by the Western media.
>
> What is not conveyed to us, although also true, is that these same workers and peasants regularly take great risks to change their lives and societies. People do not passively accept oppression, although often their situations force them to limit their responses. Death, arrest, and torture are very common. So is heroism.
>
> This book focuses on workers' efforts to change their society and their own lives in one "underdeveloped" country—the Philippines. This book is not designed to show you how impoverished or downtrodden Filipinos are—although approximately 75 percent of them live below the Philippine poverty line—but to show how they are trying to change their situation despite facing numerous obstacles put in their path. (Scipes 1996, viii)

For multiple reasons, there are a number of efforts from around the world to join

workers, unions, and—sometimes—consumers together to build mutual support: global labor solidarity. Although this has been taking place since the 1840s in Europe, it seems to be resurging in Canada and Europe since the 1970s, with the United States lagging somewhat behind. Yet the need is becoming more obvious day by day.

This edited collection is an effort to better understand what has happened in the past, to understand what is happening today, and to get people to think and act toward building a better tomorrow. It argues that there are no national solutions anymore; situations must be placed in a global context, and solutions must advance the struggle for economic and social justice for all of us, even if our efforts are uneven.

Fortunately, as will be seen, we are not the first to write on this subject, and hopefully we will not be the last. There has been a considerable amount already published on this subject. In this volume, we try to advance the thinking and theorization of building global labor solidarity and specifically argue that while it must involve unions, it cannot be confined to them. We include articles by writers from around the world, and we discuss workers' efforts in a number of countries and regions.

However, there are many limitations with this work as well. We cannot cover the world and do not pretend to do so. An anonymous reviewer for the publisher pointed this out:

> Missing is any discussion of the new, nontraditional unions in Western Europe (SUD in France; COBAS in Spain, etc.) that attempt to put forward international labor solidarity and social movement unionism. The same could be said of the New Trade Union Initiative in India and the split in COSATU in South Africa. There is also the question of China, where some international labor solidarity efforts around China [have taken place].

Despite these limitations, we hope we can inspire people to get involved in seeing the world as a global "one," learn what they can do to advance labor solidarity, and then share their experiences and reflections with the rest of us. We know reactionary global forces are trying to separate, isolate, and then immobilize us, picking us off one by one. In this context, it is worth remembering Benjamin Franklin's wise words at the signing of the American Declaration of Independence in 1776: "We must, indeed, all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

ABBREVIATIONS

AAFLI Asian American Free Labor Institute, Asian regional organization of AFL-CIO, 1967–1997

ACILS American Center for International Labor Solidarity, global organization of AFL-CIO (founded in 1997)—has recently changed its name to The Solidarity Center.

AFL-CIO American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations (US)

AIFLD American Institute for Free Labor Development, Latin American regional organization of AFL-CIO, 1962–1997

ANC African National Congress (South Africa)

APPO Asamblea Popular de los Pueblos de Oaxaca (Popular Association of the People of Oaxaca) (Mexico)

BCTUG British Columbia Trade Union Group (Canada)

BDS Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (movement against Israel's apartheid regime)

BFWS Bangladesh Federation of Workers Solidarity

BGIWF Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation

BGMEA Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association

BIGUF Bangladesh Independent Garment Workers Union Federation

BNGWEL Bangladesh National Garment Workers Employment League

BRICS Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

CAIMAW Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers

CAW Canadian Auto Workers (left UAW in 1984)

CCC Clean Clothes Campaign (Europe)

CCL Canadian Congress of Labour

CCU Confederation of Canadian Unions

CIDA Canadian International Development Agency

CITU Center of Indian Trade Unions (India)

CJM Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras (US and Mexico)

CLC Canadian Labour Congress

COPE Committee on Political Education

COSATU Congress of South African Trade Unions

COSIPLAN Council for Infrastructure and Planning (South America)

CPC Communist Party of Canada

CROM Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (Revolutionary Confederation of

Mexican Workers)

CSN Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (Quebec, Canada)

CTA Central de Trabajadores de la Argentina (Argentine Workers' Central Union)

CTM Confederación de Trabajadores de México (Confederation of Mexican Workers)

CUPE Canadian Union of Public Employees

CUPW Canadian Union of Postal Workers

CUT Central Única dos Trabalhadores (Brazil)

CAT Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador (Workers Support Center) (Puebla, Mexico)

ECLAC Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

EPZ export processing zone

ETUC European Trade Union Congress

FAT Frente Auténtico del Trabajo (Authentic Labor Front) (Mexico)

FDI foreign direct investment

FIOB Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations) (Oaxaca, Mexico)

FLOC Farm Labor Organizing Committee (US)

FMLN Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front) (El Salvador)

FTAA Free Trade Area of the Americas

GJSM Global Justice and Solidarity Movement

GSP Generalized System of [Trade] Preferences

GSU Grain Services Union (Canada)

GUF Global Union Federation—formerly known as International Trade Secretariats

HSA Hemispheric Social Alliance (South America)

IAD International Affairs Department, AFL-CIO (US)

IBT International Brotherhood of Teamsters (US and Canada)

ICFTU International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, 1949–2006

IFOU Iraqi Federation of Oil Unions

ILO International Labour Organization

ILR International Labour Reports (UK) journal

ILRF International Labor Rights Forum (US)

ILWU International Longshore and Warehouse Union (West Coast, US and Canada)

IMF International Monetary Fund

ISA International Solidarity Affair (KMU—Philippines)

ITF International Transport Workers' Federation

ITUC International Trade Union Confederation

IUD Industrial Union Department, AFL-CIO (US)

IWW Industrial Workers of the World

KMU Kilusang Mayo Uno (May First Movement) (Philippines)

KCTU Korean Confederation of Trade Unions

LAWG Latin American Working Group (Canada)

LGBT lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (movement)

Los Mineros Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Mineros, Metalúrgicos, Siderúgicos y Similares (Mexico)

L4P Labor for Palestine (Canada)

MAI Multilateral Accord on Investments

NAACP National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (US)

NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NED National Endowment for Democracy (US government)

NGO nongovernmental organization (in US, generally referred to as a "nonprofit")

NGWF National Garment Workers Federation (Bangladesh)

NILS Newsletter of International Labour Studies (Netherlands) journal

PAN Partido Acción Nacional (National Action Party) (Mexico)

PATCO Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (US)

PLADA Development Platform of the Americas

PRD Partido de la Revolución Democrática (Democratic Revolutionary Party) (Mexico)

PRI Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Mexico)

PWSC Philippine Workers' Support Committee (US)

SACTU South African Congress of Trade Unions

SEIU Service Employees International Union (US and Canada)

SIGTUR Southern Initiative on Globalization and Trade Union Rights

SITTIM Sindicato Independiente de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de la Industria Maquila (Independent Union of Workers in Baja California's Maquiladora Industry) (Mexico)

SILP Saskatchewan International Labour Project (Canada)

SME Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas (Mexican electrical workers union)

SORWUC Service, Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada

SSC South African Congress of Trade Unions Solidarity Committee (Canada)

SUTAUR Mexico City Bus Workers Union

TIE Transnational Information Exchange

TLC Trades and Labour Congress (Canada)

TNCDPE Trinational Coalition to Defend Public Education (North America)

TPP Trans-Pacific Partnership

TUC Trades Union Congress (UK)

TUCA Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (Latin America)

TUCP Trade Union Congress of the Philippines

UAW United Auto Workers (US and Canada, 1937–1984; after 1984, US only—see CAW)

UE United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (US)

UFCW United Food and Commercial Workers (US and Canada)

UFW United Farm Workers (US)

UNISUR Union of South American States

USAID United States Agency for International Development (US government)

USLAW United States Labor Against War

USSW United Service Workers West—California local of SEIU

USTR United States Trade Representative

USW United Steelworkers (US)

VDLC Vancouver and District Labour Council (Canada)

WCL World Confederation of Labor

WFTU World Federation of Trade Unions

WRC Worker Rights Consortium (US)

WTO World Trade Organization

WWA Workers' Welfare Association (Bangladesh)

WWSC Worker-to-Worker Solidarity Committee (US)

INTRODUCTION

Kim Scipes

Welcome to this volume of *Building Global Labor Solidarity in a Time of Accelerating Globalization*. This volume includes a number of interesting and, hopefully, stimulating chapters on this subject, and we hope you will read carefully and consider and discuss them with coworkers, friends, and activists. Our goal is to stimulate further thinking and action on these issues.

However, while the chapters combined are a collective project, this introduction is not: this is the editor's understanding of the issues and situations that are being addressed. Some of the chapter authors may agree with me, in whole or in part, and some will disagree; one should not attribute the views expressed in this introduction to any of the contributors unless they specifically accept them.

Origins of Project and Follow-Up

In late 2012 and early 2013, I proposed a special thematic issue of *WorkingUSA: The Journal of Labor and Society* on the subject of global labor solidarity to editor Immanuel Ness, who eagerly accepted. We decided to seek the best writing that we could find on the topic, and we announced the issue and called for articles. We widely circulated this call to progressive academic journals, labor-focused journals, particular labor centers, and individual activists and scholars. After receiving articles from a wide number of countries—submissions came from writers and researchers from Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Germany, Hong Kong, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States—and after having them assessed by reviewers from around the world, we chose the six we felt were the best. These were published in *WorkingUSA*, volume 17, number 2, in June 2014.

Along with the call for journal papers, we also decided to publish an edited volume on the same subject and invited submissions. Professor Ness's work took him in other directions (see Ness 2016), so I decided to proceed on my own. We received several articles, and from those we accepted six, which are published herein—Michael Zweig's is the only reprint from the journal collection—and these are joined by my two contributions.

Again, we didn't set any standards about accepting a common political perspective, requiring agreement on sources, and so on; we went for the best articles that we received. So there is a wide level of politics encapsulated in this volume—and to some this will be disconcerting. This allows us to get a feel for what is being written around the world. Also, we did not require that the writers be academics: David Bacon and Timothy Ryan are not. And among the five of us who are academics, three—Bruno Dobrusin, Jenny Jungehülsing, and Katherine Nastovski—are all "new academics," each working on their PhDs. Interestingly, these new academics are also the ones from outside of the United States: from Argentina, Germany, and Canada, respectively. Two of us who are "established" academics—Michael Zweig and myself—are also long-time labor and political activists. This breadth of this collection is encouraging,

and we hope it will encourage many more cross-border collaborations.

However, while each of these articles is interesting in and of itself, it is time to put them into the larger social context in which they fit—and again, this analysis is solely that of the editor.

Social Context

There are numerous terms tossed around these days as writers try to understand what is going on in the world. Three most relevant for this study are "globalization," "neoliberal economics" (often combined with globalization to create "neoliberal globalization"), and "imperialism." These are discussed to clarify our thinking.

Globalization

Globalization is an ongoing process. Using the term means taking a planetary scope, no longer restricting one's analysis to the level of the nation-state. This does not mean that the nation-state is obsolete, irrelevant, and so on, but that we cannot confine our political analysis to just the nation-state level. Jan Nederveen Pieterse expands on this:

> Among analysts and policy makers, North and South, there is an emerging consensus on several features of globalization: globalization is being shaped by technological changes, involves the reconfiguration of states, goes together with regionalization [for example, European Union, Latin Americanization—KS], and is uneven. (2015, 8)

He further writes that while people oftentimes refer to time-space compression, "It means that globalization involves more intensive interaction across wider space and in shorter time than before" (Nederveen Pieterse 2015, 8).[1]

There are issues, however, concerning globalization where there are still considerable controversies. Following Nederveen Pieterse, I argue that in addition to the above, globalization is multidimensional (that is, cannot be confined to just one aspect, such as economics, but includes things such as politics and culture) and should be seen as a long-term phenomenon that begins thousands of years ago "in the first migrations of people and long-distrance trade connections and subsequently accelerates under particular conditions (the spread of technologies, religions, literacy, empires, capitalism)" (Nederveen Pieterse 2015, 70–71).[2] In other words globalization *predates* capitalism and modernity, which means it predates the "West." And, of course, that it did not begin in the 1970s.

While globalization is a much broader, deeper, and longer set of processes than is usually recognized, these processes began accelerating in the early 1970s.

> If globalization during the second half of the twentieth century coincided with the "American Century" and the period 1980–2000 coincided with the dominance of Anglo-American capitalism and American hegemony, twenty-first-century globalization shows markedly different dynamics. American hegemony has weakened, the US economy is import dependent, deeply indebted, and mired in financial crises.
>
> The new trends of twenty-first century globalization are the centers of the world economy shifting to the global South, to the newly industrialized countries, and to the energy exporters. (Nederveen Pieterse 2015, 24)[3]

He further points out these changes are taking place in economic and financial spheres, in international institutions, and among patterns of migration. He summarizes that "the unquestioned cultural hegemony of the West is past" (Nederveen Pieterse 2015 24–25).

Neoliberal Economics[4]

By the mid-1960s, the World War II–ravaged countries of Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom had recovered to such an extent that their corporations were able to compete with those of the United States on their home turf, in Europe and Japan. By the 1970s, some of these corporations were competing with US corporations on the American corporations' home turf, inside the United States.

What we were seeing was that the unfettered world that the US economy had operated within after World War II was changing: no longer under control of the United States, it was shifting from a centralized system dominated by one country to a decentralized one that was much more competitive. By the 1980s, increasing competition was coming from corporations from some of the so-called developing countries. These trends have only continued to develop.

Production in the United States had stagnated in the 1970s, and this was joined with increasing monetary inflation. The United States was clearly losing its economic advantages to competing countries.

The Business Roundtable—a grouping of CEOs of leading US corporations—was formed in 1972 to begin offering "solutions" in response to the economic lethargy they saw developing. Basically, they decided that they could no longer tolerate trade unions that limited their managerial control on shop floors and developed strategies to remove that problem.

> The rise and triumph of the corporate neo-liberal agenda did not simply happen because of "market forces" or globalization. The most powerful corporations in the US—many of them the most powerful in the world—organized to make it happen; they developed their own consensus and mobilized their vast resources and network to *make* it happen. They were determined to counter the surge in labor militancy and reverse the wage gains that took place in the 1960s and peaked during the last phase of the Vietnam War in 1969–71. The corporate offensive was not only aimed at constraining workers' militancy and reducing wage gains, it was also a response to the challenges that seemed to be posed by the various protest movements of the 1960s, movements that appeared threatening to the status quo and had resonances among young and Black workers. (Roman and Velasco Arregui 2013, 7; italics in original)

These strategies included actions on multiple levels. They challenged trade-union limitations on shop floors, but they went much further than that. They decided that they would "outsource" labor-intensive production to countries that had low labor costs and that would compete to get investment for their countries. They would work with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to get them to provide infrastructure investments for these countries to support any new foreign investment. They would upgrade technology in US factories, replacing workers with newly designed machines with "labor-saving" aspects. They would work with "leading"

intellectuals to develop an understanding of the changes needed that was conveyable to the public—hence, the propagation of what became known as "neoliberal" economics. They would support politicians and judges who would support their program, and they would support and fund politicians who would advance these ideas as part of their electoral campaign, especially at the national level.

The philosophy of neoliberal economics was key to this strategy. Basically, it argued that the well-being of US corporations was central to the well-being of the US economy and that the *key to the well-being of US corporations was to eradicate any restrictions on US corporations*. This has been explicated by David Harvey:

> Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberated individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate for such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set-up those military, defence, police, and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security or environmental pollution) then they must be created by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks, the state should not venture. State intervention in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit. (Harvey 2005, 2)

While this had much broader ramifications for society as a whole, the heart of the matter was an attack on collective worker organization in the workplace. This meant allowing US corporations unfettered control over their workforces, marginalizing if not destroying trade unions in their factories and other operations. It meant undermining strikes by allowing "replacement workers" (scabs) and ensuring their job "rights" after strikes ended. It meant replacing, whenever possible, regular, full-time workers with contractual and part-time workers; and by establishing for those more recently hired a lower "tier" of wages and benefits. It meant undercutting health and safety protections, workers' compensation schemes (for those hurt on the job), and any other restrictions that might limit production and productivity. And it meant prohibiting any regulations and restrictions on corporate decisions as to where and under what conditions they could invest or disinvest from communities.

As I wrote in 1984, "This offensive [cutting production costs of corporations] has taken many approaches. It includes 'rationalization' (getting rid of surplus and/or old plants), modernization, concessions, and bankruptcy. Oftentimes, an attack will combine several of these approaches." I continued:

> The point of mentioning these different industry and company approaches is to show many different ways workers are under attack. Each one of these attacks is ultimately an assault against unions. The important goal is to destroy worker resistance on the shop floor. Every company wants to be able to force workers to do what the company wants, when the

> company wants, how the company wants. They see unions as institutionalized forms of resistance, and if a union is standing up for its members at all, they want to subjugate and crush it. (Scipes 1984, 20–21)

Yet neoliberal economics went beyond "liberating" the particular corporations from the "oppression" of having to treat their workers respectfully: it meant restructuring the entire social order. As Francis Fox Piven notes, neoliberal economic politics are a set of policies carried out in the name of individualism and unfettered markets for

> the deregulation of corporations, and particularly financial institutions; the rollback of public services and benefit programs; curbing labor unions; "free trade" policies that would pry open foreign markets; and whenever possible, the replacement of public programs with private markets. (2007, 17)

They also included tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, as well as cuts in environmental programs.

The right-wing forces that opposed governmental intervention in the economy—whether opposing the social programs of the 1960s (often for racist reasons) or because of economic philosophy—coalesced in the presidential campaign and, beginning in January 1981, in the administration of Ronald Reagan. These people took an ideological approach that any governmental intervention in the economy was deleterious to economic growth and societal well-being, unless it directly benefited themselves or their particular political program. Reagan parsed it, saying, "Government isn't the solution; it's the problem."

In 1980, and again in 1982, the economy contracted. In 1982, the ideologues under Reagan convinced him of the necessity to wring inflation out of the economy, and the government did not intervene to "restimulate" the economy: although interest rates reached 21 percent, Reagan did not launch new social programs or increase funding for established ones. Unemployment exploded, reaching the highest levels since the Great Depression.

At the same time, Reagan attacked the labor movement, the one force—despite its many limitations—that had provided economic advancement for millions of Americans.[5] When the air traffic controllers' union (PATCO—Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization) struck in 1981, Reagan brought in military air traffic controllers to break the strike. (One of the great errors made by the national leaders of the labor movement, having disastrous effects, was refusing to shut down the entire airline industry, which was still heavily unionized, to stop Reagan's union busting.) The federal government's union busting, as well as other right-wing legislative and court decisions that attacked the labor movement, unleashed business's ability to increase productivity at the direct expense of workers—particularly by moving labor-intensive jobs to low-wage countries like Mexico and China (destroying jobs in the United States) and by investing in capital-intensive machinery that was also designed to eradicate jobs in the United States.

Yet Reagan, despite the mythology that has been created around him, ended up hurting the economy in a long-term manner that has rarely been acknowledged. He engaged in massive deficit spending—only this spending was not to help the American

people in general; it was to help the richest Americans, the US military and the arms industry, and global investors (including central banks of foreign countries). Reagan began spending hundreds of billions of dollars each year on the war department—I refuse to call it "defense"—and he did it by doubling the national debt in eight years. When he came into office in 1981, the US national debt—from 1789 under George Washington to the end of Jimmy Carter's administration—was at $0.907 trillion. When Reagan left eight years later, it was $2.7 trillion. (It has continued rising since then under both Democratic and Republican presidents and today is over $18.1 trillion.)[6]

In other words, the US economy has done as well as it has over the past thirty-plus years—and it has done much worse than it did from 1947 to 1973—only because the US government has been writing "hot checks" to pay for its expenditures. At some point in time, that debt will have to be repaid—and it's not going to be pretty. (Scipes 2009)

The entire ideology of neoliberal economics has been a brutal assault on most Americans' economic well-being. This can be seen, in general, by looking at global growth rates and then looking at income distribution within the United States.

Harvey asks, "To what degree . . . has globalization succeeded in stimulating capital accumulation?" After finding data from the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization's report, *A Fair Globalization*, he then concludes, "Its actual record turns out to be nothing short of dismal." He elaborates:

> Aggregate global growth rates stood at 3.5 per cent or so in the 1960s and even during the troubled 1970s fell only to 2.4 per cent. But the subsequent growth rates of 1.4 per cent and 1.1 per cent for the 1980s and 1990s (and a rate that barely touches 1 per cent since 2000 [Harvey was writing in about 2003, before the Great Recession—KS]) indicate that neoliberalism has broadly failed to stimulate worldwide growth. (Harvey 2005, 154)

In 2009, I published an article titled "An Alternative Perspective for the Global South—Neoliberal Economic Policies in the United States: The Impact of Globalization on a 'Northern' Country" in the *Indian Journal of Politics and International Relations* from Mohandas Gandhi University in Kerala (Scipes 2009). In this article, after dividing the population into fifths—each "quintile" containing 20 percent of the population, except the top "quintile," which only covered the 15 percent of the population getting 80–95 percent of income, so this data from the US government does not include the top five percent of the population—I examined the changes in American family incomes from 1947 to 2005, although I divided this period into three subsections: 1947–1973, 1973–2001, and 2001–2005. (This means these findings were from before the Great Recession.)

The results differed dramatically. What I found was that in the 1947–1973 period, each quintile roughly doubled its income, and that the growth rates across the quintiles were roughly equal, varying from a 91 percent to a 107 percent increase (100 percent signifying a doubling). During the 1973–2001 period, growth for the highest quintile was only 58 percent, and there was wide variation between the quintiles, with the growth rate increasing as one went higher in the income level: from 14 to 19, 29, 42

and 58 percent, respectively (signifying a relative loss of income when compared to those at the top, with the gap greatest for those in the bottom quintile). And then, when I looked at the 2001–2005 period, I found that the growth rate for the "top" (80–95 percent) was only 1.94 percent, and that the *bottom 80 percent of Americans had suffered an absolute loss of income during the period* (suggesting that whatever income growth had occurred had gone to those in the top 5 percent, although subsequent research suggests it actually was concentrated within the top .01 percent).

The point I'm making here is that American family incomes have not only fallen relatively—in comparison to those at top levels—but that they fell absolutely in the 2001–2005 period. And if we compare the percentage of total income that goes to each quintile of the population, we see the share going to the bottom four quintiles in 2005 was not only less than in 2001, or in 1973, but less than in 1947! (The share of the 80–95 percent group went from 43.0 percent in 1947, down to 41.1 percent in 1973, up to 47.7 percent in 2001, and up to 48.1 percent in 2005. Subsequent newspaper reports have suggested their share has continued to grow post–Great Recession.)

Neoliberal economics has been an absolute disaster for most Americans (see Fraser 2015, 341–74), but to overcome these economic policies, we must challenge the whole set of values of neoliberalism.

Along with the attacks on unions, unfunded wars, et cetera, the philosophy of neoliberal economics has collapsed our societal values into one thing: profitability. If something enhances the potential of increased profitability of business, it is good; if it does not—no matter how important anything else is—it is bad. If regulations on food or air or water quality or worker safety cost corporations money, they are bad and should be immediately disbanded, no matter how beneficial they are to people, to the environment, or to our general social order. It is this "philosophy" that the US government has been pushing around the world, and it has hurt billions of people, including millions within the United States.

What this has meant for labor is that anything that has limited the power of business, especially but not limited to in workplaces—unions themselves, strikes, any type of health and safety regulations, and so forth—has been attacked by corporations. Additionally, through legislative and court decisions, actions that have limited workers' collective power—protecting strike breakers, contract labor, and efforts to destroy unions through privatizing public services, et cetera—have been supported. Again, anything that hinders or reduces profitability, no matter how much of a social good it provides, is bad. That is the philosophy and impact of neoliberal economics.

Yet something else has happened in the United States in addition to adopting neoliberal economics. The upsurge during the 1960s and early 1970s—including the civil rights and black power movements, the women's movement, the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) movement, the environmental movement, the anti–Vietnam War movement, and especially the anti–Vietnam War movement *inside* the US military—profoundly scared the ruling elites. They decided that they would do whatever they could to ensure that collectivity, and especially collective action, would never again raise its ugly head in this social order.[7]

To accomplish this, the ruling elites have been creating a culture of *individualism* to

undercut any aspirations of collectivity.[8] Basically, that mindset says as long as you and your loved ones are okay, you do not have to worry about the well-being of anyone else in the country—and, in fact, elites told people that caring about others would undermine their individual interests. They created what I have called the "I've got mine; screw you, Jack" culture and society. And this "screw you, Jack" ideology has been very successful: despite growing income inequality in the United States—which is more extreme than that in some of the poorest nations on the planet (for example, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Mozambique, Uganda, and Vietnam—see Scipes 2009, 28–29)—there was no nationwide discussion of this from about 1973 until the Occupy Wall Street movement that emerged in the fall of 2011, a period of almost forty years.

So, starting probably in about 1978, but specifically with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, right-wing ideologues (including their allies in the mainstream media—FOX and the rest) have deceived the country into believing that anything that hinders business's potential for enhanced profitability is bad and that all forms of collectivity are self-defeating. Thus, Reagan not only moved the Republican Party to the far right, but he also got the Democratic Party to move to the right as well—arguably, no subsequent presidential administration has passed as liberal a domestic program as Richard Nixon's from 1969 to 1973.[9]

Imperialism

Since my chapter on theorizing global labor solidarity specifically includes a more in-depth discussion of the concept of imperialism, I'll say only a few words here.

Imperialism is a term that is often dismissed as rhetorical, but it is used empirically herein to discuss reality on the ground. It basically refers to the idea that not all countries have roughly comparable political-economic power; imperialism refers to the fact that some countries are more powerful than others and that the strong use this power to maintain or extend their domination when other countries resist subjugating themselves to the more powerful country.

There has been considerable debate among analysts about the relationship between imperialism and globalization; in fact, some refer to it as "imperialist globalization."

That is not the approach taken by myself and at least some others—perhaps most clear is Nederveen Pieterse (2004). Globalization has been going on for thousands of years. Sometimes this has taken the form of imperialism—Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, and so forth—but other times it has not, such as when we discuss cross-border migration. Modern imperialism, however, starts with the seagoing "voyages of discovery" of the Western European countries, roughly around 1500.

Since at least the end of World War II in 1945—and some would say since 1898, with the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars—the United States has tried to dominate the rest of the world. This has had a dynamic designed to advance the interests of the United States—as determined by the elites of this country—over those of every other country. Through developing what can only be called "American nationalism" (and Harvey 2005, 195–197 develops this argument further) and propagating that ideology through the school system, through churches, and through

other societal institutions (and by lying about it extensively in the mass media), the elites have gotten large numbers of Americans to support their imperial adventures.

One of the interesting things about American social self-deception is that this imperial project of the elites has been said to be the basis of our high standard of living and national well-being—that is, we need to be imperialist (although never put in these terms) to live so well.

However, since about 1973—and certainly by 1979—the US standard of living has stagnated, if not gotten worse. Neoliberal economics has been a disaster for many Americans: social inequality has mushroomed; our social services and educational system have been under attack; and for the first time in US history, today's generation will not do as well as their parents did. And things are only going to get worse for increasing numbers of people.

It is time for us to consider a new way of relating among ourselves, to human beings around the world, as well as to the planetary environment.

Global Development

This collection is an entry into a larger political debate that does not usually recognize, much less acknowledge, the importance of the issue at hand.

The issue is global development. The problem is this: how are the peoples of the world, located in different countries defined as nation-states and located among a myriad of levels of economic, political, cultural, and social development—hence, this is not an approach centralized on the United States, Europe, or even the "Global North" but rather a global approach—going to advance their social well-being, both individually and collectively?

Jan Nederveen Pieterse advances the concept of "critical globalism," which he defines as the "critical engagement with globalization processes, neither blocking nor celebrating them" (2010, 49). He elaborates:

> As a global agenda, critical globalism means posing the central question of global inequality in its new manifestations. As a research agenda, it entails identifying the social forces that carry different transnational processes and examining varying conceptualizations of the global environment and the globalizing momentum. . . .
>
> What, under the circumstances, is the meaning of world development? Because of the combined changes of globalization, informatization and flexibilization there is a new relevance to the notion that 'all societies are developing.' This is not just an agreeable sounding cliché but a reality confirmed by transformations taking place everywhere, on macro as well as micro levels. The whole world is in 'transition.' (Nederveen Pieterse 2010, 50)

Nederveen Pieterse, referring to the work of Björn Hettne, accepts the idea that perhaps the greatest contradiction in what gets called "development theory" is the debate between endogenous (or internal) or exogenous (external) factors as being key to social development. Nederveen Pietersse recognizes this is a false debate, arguing that there is an interaction between endogenous factors (such as determined by the state) and exogenous factors (such as determined by global market forces). However—and this is important—he recognizes the inadequacy of limiting focus to just the

interaction between state and market forces, because this ignores “civil society,” those forces that are not included in either.

Civil Society

Nederveen Pieterse argues that we have to include civil society, and particularly those parts of civil society that are organized into and around NGOs.[10] He points out that “NGOs . . . are part of globalization, when viewed multidimensionally,” and “what they do and can do is to negotiate the *kind* of globalization they seek to promote and be part of” (2010, 52).

That makes sense, as far as it goes, but it glosses over three big things. First, the range of organizations placed under the NGO rubric is extremely broad; all NGOs are not the same: the rubric incorporates international health-oriented organizations working in multiple countries (Asad and Kay 2014), and it can include a single local organization such as a women’s shelter from domestic violence. Second, not all NGOs are “progressive,” “pro-people,” and so on. And third, even when an organization is “pro-
people” and “progressive”—by which I mean their work is life-enhancing and is directed to advancing the interests of the majority of people—this does not mean they have any power to advance their program. In probably the majority of cases, they can advance good ideas and good values—important in and of themselves—but they have no way to activate forces that can advance their agenda.

Thus, we have to dig deeper, so to speak. We must seek to find if there are any social forces that might be able to articulate progressive, life-enhancing values and pro-people interests and that have the power to *force* both the state and corporations (market forces) to back off and give space to pro-people organizations and their social programs, as well as limit the oppression of the majority of the population.

I’m going to suggest that there is a force that meets these qualifications: the labor movement.

The Labor Movement

Now, before moving forward, I must quickly add that we have to apply considerable nuance to what we mean by “labor movement”: Labor, like any other social force, is not monolithic; it is particularly heterogeneous, has multiple approaches and visions, and is chock-full of contradictions. I am not saying all labor organizations meet these goals of being life-enhancing, pro-people, and willing to fight for a better world.

To delve further into this idea, however, we must be able to disaggregate labor to locate the forces of which I’m thinking. First of all, it is fair to generalize that most labor organizations are hierarchical organizations, in which top leadership has more decision-making power than those below them, and in which those at the top will seek to maintain that power and advance the issues they see as most salient for their organizational advancement and for the maintenance of their organization. In other words, most labor organizations are neither decentralized, egalitarian, nor democratic.

Yet—and this is where it gets interesting—because of their values, enunciated ethics, and legitimized social role as “defender of workers,” there is an instability that

exists even within the most rigid labor hierarchy: members can organize, can seek to replace leaders, and can actually take over and replace organizational leadership. It is rare, it is unusual, it is extremely difficult, but there have been times—such as when Arnold Miller and the Miners for Democracy took over the United Mine Workers, or when Ron Carey and his allies took over the Teamsters, or when John Sweeney and his allies took over the AFL-CIO itself[11]—when this has taken place, even in the most dictatorial and hierarchical labor organizations. Now, let's be clear: replacing one leadership with another does not necessarily guarantee that the insurgents will advance the values and interests that they had advocated while out of power upon attaining power.

For example, the AFL-CIO leadership has long carried out a reactionary foreign policy program in secret, behind the backs of their members but in the name of workers. It was one area of considerable dissatisfaction among labor activists and some labor leaders with the president, Lane Kirkland, and it contributed to the defeat of Kirkland's appointed successor, Tom Donahue, by insurgent John Sweeney in 1995. Sweeney got into office and made some significant changes, but on his watch, the AFL-CIO's new American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS, or more recently, the Solidarity Center) gave indirect support to forces that tried to overthrow democratically elected Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in April 2002. Then, at the 2005 AFL-CIO national convention in Chicago, Sweeney and his allies refused to allow discussion of the AFL-CIO's foreign policy program, even though the resolution calling for the discussion had been properly advanced by the California AFL-CIO through the AFL-CIO's policies and constitutional procedures (Scipes 2010a—see especially pp. 56–66 and chapter 3, 69–82). So, replacing leadership is not always a viable solution. However, it means that labor is not inherently and always stable.

For another level of nuance, there are labor organizations that have been established by dictatorships—an example I am familiar with is the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), which was created by the Marcos dictatorship[12]—and they can act in ways that *oppose* progressive, pro-people labor centers and organizations. As detailed in my earlier book, *KMU: Building Genuine Trade Unionism in the Philippines, 1980–1994*, a TUCP-affiliated union—ALU (Associated Labor Unions)—collaborated with corporate management, the military, reactionary municipal officials, and a known death squad (no exaggeration) to try to defeat an affiliate of the progressive, pro-people Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) Labor Center in a certification election at Atlas Mines in that country. Fortunately, the KMU affiliate prevailed despite all of this, winning 5,025 votes in the government-sponsored election to ALU's 292 (Scipes 1996—see especially pp. 116–125; for a more succinct account, see Scipes 2010a, 48–56).

Additionally, there are a lot of labor organizations that are business unions that only care about the wages, benefits, and working conditions they can win for their members at work, ignoring their effects on other people, whether positive or negative.

Progressive Unionism

However, there are progressive unions that try to improve their members' lives in the

workplace but who also tackle issues that affect their members outside of work.

There are examples both from the past as well as today, theoretically identified as social-justice unions (Scipes 2014d).[13] These are a form of the economic type of trade unionism. A good example from the 1930s to the ’60s is the United Packinghouse Workers of America, whose members confronted racism inside the packinghouses, in their union, and in their communities, but they were forced to merge into other unions once the packing companies shut down the stockyards in Chicago (see Scipes 2003). There are a number of other unions—such as the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), the United Electrical workers (UE), and a few others today—that can be considered as practitioners of social-justice unionism.

There are also political types of unions that have been created to advance the interests of particular nationalist, socialist, social-democratic, or communist parties in their struggles to advance their self-defined interests (see Pillay 2013; Scipes 1992a, 1992b). These types of unions generally place the interests of their initiating organization over the direct interests of the union members, although not always, and when they address interests of their members they generally take a broader approach.

And finally, there are labor organizations that recognize not only the oppression of the workplace but also how conditions in workplaces are integrally linked to both the national situation and the global political-economic networks in which their countries are enmeshed. Thus, they recognize that they have to confront issues at these other levels as well as in the workplace if they hope to improve the lives of members and their families. Unionism of this more encompassing kind is called “social-movement unionism” (again, see Scipes 2014d).

Synopsis

The point—which I hope by now is obvious—is that not all unions are progressive, pro-people, and willing to use their power to fight for changes that will benefit all. In fact, most are not willing to do anything more than support their members and their members alone and separate from the rest of their society. We must recognize the multiplicity of experiences that are encompassed by the term “labor organizations.”

However, at the same time, we must recognize that there are progressive unions that seek to address issues for their members not only in the workplace but also in the larger society as well. How far they will go varies; nonetheless, for these unions, their willingness to transcend traditional, narrow business unionism is considerable. And it is these unions, grouped herein under the term “progressive unionism,” that I suggest can articulate progressive, life-enhancing values and pro-people interests, and can develop the power to force both the state and corporations to back off and give space to pro-people organizations and their social programs and limit the oppression of the majority of the population. Thus, I suggest the larger social importance of these progressive unions. Writers who focus on macro-level issues like globalization and neoliberal economics need to incorporate progressive unions into their thinking.

Yet I want to return to an earlier point, made above. Labor organizations can change; if not from the top, then they can be changed from the bottom.

This is why a collection of essays such as this one is so important: in addition to

encouraging ways to build global labor solidarity, it also allows us to reflect on our own unions and to decide how we want to transform them to become a progressive social force in our own social order. The struggle to build global labor solidarity is also a struggle to transform our unions into progressive social forces, able to unite with and propel local forces for social justice, while seeking justice not only for ourselves and our members but also for working people globally (see Fletcher and Gapasin 2008; Nastovski 2016).

Reflecting on Globalization

While I agree with Nederveen Pieterse's thinking about globalization—including that it is multidimensional and that it predates modernity—I want to add another point about globalization: it is multilayered (Scipes 2012; Shiva 2005; Starr 2005). This is an important point.

Business and governments have appropriated the term "globalization," insisting that is a monolithic force of good that is deluging the world and is enveloping all within it, like a wall of floodwater that cannot be stopped.

Activists initially responded to this by being against globalization; for instance, Amory Starr's 2005 book was titled *Global Revolt: A Guide to the Movements Against Globalization*. However, activists came to see that we were not against globalization but rather against the type of globalization that was being promoted and propagated (for example, Friedman 1999).

A number of authors think a better idea is to recognize that there are two levels of globalization—a top-down corporate/militaristic globalization and a bottom-up global movement for social and economic justice—and that these two levels are based on values completely antithetical to the other (Shiva 2005). By that I mean that globalization is *not* a monolith, a single, collective phenomenon, but that it has at least two layers. So we can refer to "globalization from above" and "globalization from below." What does that mean?

Accepting Nederveen Pieterse's claim that "globalization involves more intensive interaction across wider space and in shorter time than before" (2015, 8), we must look at the values of each of these levels of globalization. The values of top-down globalization are those that promote the unhindered spread of capitalism and particularly corporations around the world and the militarism (and related wars and military operations) needed to ensure that is possible. In other words, top-down globalization is the latest effort to dominate the world, all living beings, and the planet. Accordingly, if one wants to attach the term neoliberal to globalization, then the understanding must be that this refers to *only* one level of globalization—the top-down level—and thus a particular level of globalization, and that it should not be considered synonymous with globalization as a whole.

Globalization from below, on the other hand, is life-enhancing: it rejects domination in all of its forms and seeks to build a new world based on equality, social and economic justice, and respect for all living beings and the planet (again, see Shiva 2005). The two worldviews, and the values on which each are based, could not be more opposed.

This is where my call for macro-level thinkers to incorporate progressive unionism into their analyses becomes even more important. These progressive unions are part of the global movement for economic and social justice (whether they recognize it or not), and as they gain such consciousness, they will find ways of developing global solidarity with workers and other unions, women, peasants, students, the urban poor, and more.

Thus, understanding that there are two different levels of globalization, and that they are opposed to each other, means that people need to choose: Which side are you on?

Overview to the Collection

The articles gathered herein are each supportive of globalization from below and are efforts to help advance this understanding and related efforts.

We begin with my "Multiple Fragments—Strength or Weakness? Theorizing Global Labor Solidarity." In this chapter, I argue that to understand the United States accurately, people must realize it is the heartland of the US Empire, and therefore, there is the need for American workers to develop solidarity among themselves and to extend solidarity beyond the US nation-state, to challenge US domination and that of any other nation-states. This means we must focus on building *global* labor solidarity. I discuss the issue of solidarity in some depth and then present a theory of global labor solidarity to enhance our understanding and our efforts around the globe. I also note that there are nine different types of global solidarity developed to date and argue that these multiple efforts are a strength, not a weakness, of the global labor movement.

Katherine Nastovski's chapter, "Worker-to-Worker: A Transformative Model of Solidarity—Lessons from Grassroots International Labor Solidarity in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s," introduces us to the extensive range of efforts by Canadian workers to build grassroots labor solidarity. Key to this, she argues, is worker-to-worker solidarity, whereby workers build relationships across borders but among workers themselves. She sees worker-to-worker solidarity as building counterhegemonic practices against "established" international labor solidarity, leading also to challenges to established trade unionism in each country.

This is followed by Jenny Jungehülsing's exploratory research, which she presents in "Building Bridges Between the Labor Movement and Transnational Migration Research: What Potential for International Solidarity?" She argues that one of the weaknesses in present-day international labor solidarity is that there is little *felt* solidarity between people. Her research with local unions within particular regions of the United Steel Workers (USW) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) suggests that by working with immigrants, "felt solidarity" can be established between unions in the United States and those "back home," focusing on cases in El Salvador and Mexico. While she recognizes the exceptional circumstances in these particular cases, she is clearly intrigued by these possibilities and argues that this potential needs to be explored in greater depth.

Bruno Dobrusin takes us south in his "Labor and Sustainable Development in Latin America: Rebuilding Alliances at a New Crossroads." He talks about the continental-

wide solidarity that was developed in the fight against the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and he notes the central role of labor to that successful fight. Another fight is emerging—against the "Commodities Consensus" that progressive governments of the region are using to develop their countries, but which is being opposed more and more at local sites because of their environmental and social devastation—and he analyzes possibilities for rebuilding another continent-wide solidarity movement, only this time against the use of primary commodities as the basis for continued development.

Focus shifts to Asia, and particularly Bangladesh. The Asia regional director of the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center, Timothy Ryan, writes on building solidarity with workers in his essay "It Takes More Than a Village: A Case Study of Worker Solidarity in Bangladesh." With extensive experience in Asia, Ryan takes "some pages from practical experience and sociological models to explain how the global economy creates exploitation, how both employers and workers respond to this economic structure, and how events can pressure employers to change their sourcing practices and create openings and catalysts that help workers empower themselves."

From Bangladesh, attention is shifted to the Philippines. My chapter, "Building Global Labor Solidarity Today: Learning from the KMU of the Philippines," is an effort to share things learned from one of the most dynamic and developed labor centers in the world today, the Kilusang Mayo Uno or May First Movement. After giving an overview of the KMU, this chapter then suggests there are several things we can learn from these Filipino workers, including their development of a new type of trade unionism, "social movement unionism," which links conditions on the shop floor to national level conditions and to global economic networks in which the country is enmeshed. The chapter also discusses the KMU's innovative organizational structure; its emphasis on member
education—not confining it to formal leaders or even shop stewards, but extending it to all members; its relations with other sectoral organizations, leading to the development of the *welga ng bayan* or "people's strike"; and how it builds global labor solidarity.

Returning to North America, David Bacon writes on "Building a Culture of Solidarity Across the US-Mexico Border." Bacon—a working journalist with decades of experience in covering the border, the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on people on both sides of the border, and immigration within and from Latin America—
focuses on developments along the border in the post-NAFTA world. He concentrates on the growth of international solidarity, assesses the changes generally between Mexican and US unions in the post–Cold War era, and examines the role of migration in providing the material basis for further development of cross-border solidarity.

And last but not least, these chapters are followed by Michael Zweig's interesting call for a new labor foreign policy in his essay "Working for Global Justice in the New US Labor Movement." Zweig points out the new reorientation of the domestic labor movement, notes the sordid history of the AFL-CIO's foreign policy, and argues that it is time "for a renewed approach to foreign policy as well." Zweig uses his extensive

experience in the national leadership of US Labor Against the War (USLAW), which has led the fight within the labor movement against the US war in Iraq and, more recently, against militarism, to make a strong argument.

Some Final Thoughts

Since it was deemed necessary to discuss by the editors at Haymarket Books (our publisher), I thought I would add some comments about the inclusion of Timothy Ryan's article in this collection.

As many know, I have been one of the leading opponents to the AFL-CIO's foreign policy for almost thirty years. The foreign policy leadership of the AFL, and the AFL-CIO subsequently, has carried out a reactionary foreign policy that has helped overthrow democratically elected governments, has supported labor movements created by dictatorships, and has supported efforts to undercut progressive struggles that challenge US domination around the world. This foreign policy leadership of the AFL-CIO has done this in workers' names but has never honestly reported its operations to its members, much less asked for members' support, and has refused to discuss its foreign policy even when requests to do so have developed from within labor's established processes. This foreign policy has been overwhelmingly financed by the US government, and the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center has worked with the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, and the US Chamber of Commerce, all within the US government's National Endowment for Democracy (NED), one of the most cynical and destructive of all US government operations (outside of the US military and the Central Intelligence Agency).[14] I still consider the NED as evil and want the AFL-CIO to renounce these overseas collaborations with the US government and to try to build global labor solidarity with needy unions based on membership support and financing.

However, there seem to be differences developing within the AFL-CIO's International Affairs Department: there are some cases where the Solidarity Center has played a progressive or at least not harmful role in support of workers in a limited number of cases.[15] One of the cases is in Bangladesh. I am not suggesting this effort is going to overturn the orientation of the Solidarity Center, nor does it appear to be anything other than a minority effort. Nonetheless, Ryan's chapter is a chance to read an in-depth report about how the Solidarity Center currently operates in Bangladesh.

This chapter is even more interesting in light of Zia Rahman and Tom Langford's 2014 article, "International Solidarity or Renewed Trade Union Imperialism? The AFL-CIO and Garment Workers in Bangladesh," that appeared in the special issue of *WorkingUSA* (Scipes ed., 2014). The Rahman-Langford piece was the first time that we had an account based on interviews from labor leaders in a targeted country of how they saw the Solidarity Center's operations, and now we have an account by a Solidarity Center leader about how he sees the Solidarity Center's operations in that same country.[16] This comparison should make for some interesting conversations.

I will let others debate these issues, but I did not want to leave readers with the

opinion that I had gotten soft on the AFL-CIO's foreign operations or that I had changed my position. I have done neither. Yet, I thought, given the opportunity, I would publish Ryan's account (as well as the Rahman-Langford account) to allow people to try to come to their own positions on the subject of Bangladesh and the AFL-CIO operations in that country.

With that said, it's time to turn to the heart of this volume.

CHAPTER 1

Multiple Fragments—Strength or Weakness? Theorizing Global Labor Solidarity

Kim Scipes

After five labor movements played leading roles in overthrowing dictatorships and greatly expanding popular democracy during the mid-1980s to early 1990s,[1] labor movements are again emerging in a number of countries across the Global South, including China, Egypt, and Iran. Further, new developments are taking place within labor movements in places such as Bangladesh, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Mexico, Pakistan, South Africa, and Venezuela. How do we understand these developments, and how can working people and their organizations support these movements?

Although there has been a considerable amount of writing and thinking about international labor solidarity over the years—see, in particular, Bieler 2014; Bieler and Lindberg eds., 2011; Bieler, Lindberg, and Pillay eds., 2008; Cornfield and McCammon eds., 2003; Evans 2010, 2014; Featherstone 2012; Hanagan ed., 2003; Hathaway 2000; Kay 2005, 2011, 2015; Moody 1997; Munck 2010; Ness, 2016; Nissen ed., 2002; Roman and Velasco Arregui 2013; Scipes 1988, 2000a; Scipes ed., 2014; Waterman 1998; Waterman and Wills eds., 2001; and references to articles therein—so far there is no theory of global labor solidarity (Scipes 2014a; Waterman 1998). This article is an attempt to overcome this deficiency, proposing a theory of global labor solidarity, so as to help inform projects designed to support workers wherever in the world they may be struggling for a better future.

This chapter argues that we need to build solidarity among and with workers, both locally and globally. To do this, we need to do three specific things.

First, we in the United States need to extend our conceptualization of solidarity beyond the nation-state to include workers around the world. We Americans need to recognize that there are other countries in the world that matter—in fact, each country matters—in addition to the United States.

Key to this is the necessity of recognizing the existence of a global level of power networks (that is, there is a level of power that exists *above* each nation-state, which encompasses all nation-states), whereby one or more nation-states seek to dominate others. Accordingly, we must directly confront the concept of "imperialism," a word used herein to represent empirical reality, and which is not being used rhetorically. Confronting imperialism has a number of practical consequences; most importantly, it distinguishes different levels of political domination.

For American workers, we need to confront the fact that the United States is, in fact, the heartland of a global empire (the US Empire) that seeks to dominate the other nations of the world. You can find the truth in this statement when analysts refer to the

United States as the sole "superpower," "the hegemon" of the global system, or the leader of a unipolar world: these all add up to the reality that *the United States has been trying to dominate the world since at least the end of World War II* (many argue it goes back to at least 1898)*, and it continues to try to dominate the world today.*

This is bad for workers and poor people around the world. It sometimes leads to the United States overthrowing democratically elected governments or supporting military-political coups, as most recently in Honduras (2009), Egypt (2013), and Ukraine (2014). It often leads to the United States supporting dictatorships and other repressive regimes—both of which oppose genuine labor organizations. And it usually leads to the adoption of economic development models that attack workers and peasants, leaving them poor and impoverished, while supporting foreign and domestic investment designed to benefit only elites and corporate management.

It is also bad for American workers and poor people: besides engendering a culture of militarism and US nationalism, which celebrate violence while undermining personal freedom and liberty, the money spent by the United States for its military to try to dominate the world means that money cannot be spent on creating jobs, providing health care and education, rebuilding our infrastructure, addressing climate change, and more here in the States. It also undermines any real form of democracy in our country: empire is counterposed to popular democracy.[2] Thus, US elites can either try to dominate the world, or they can take care of people in our country: they cannot do both. I argue herein that we Americans and good people around the world need to reject empire and all efforts by the United States or any other country to dominate anyone else in the world.

Second, we need to focus on "solidarity." Working people traditionally have challenged different levels of domination through the concept of solidarity. We seek to build solidarity among and with all workers of the world—not only to support workers challenging domination within their own specific workplace or particular nation-state, but also to challenge domination of the world by any nation-state or group of nation-states. This chapter focuses on solidarity, discussing the historical emergence of international labor solidarity, motivations for solidarity, solidarity across different political levels of domination, and the scope of global labor solidarity, with multiple actors.

Third, and finally, we need to build global labor solidarity with working people around the world. Key to this, which this chapter presents, is developing a theoretical understanding of global labor solidarity, which abstracts lessons learned from previous research and contemporary descriptive accounts from around the world, and organizes them to suggest possible ways forward. This is followed by presenting nine different types of such solidarity, all of which have been identified and built globally over the past twenty or so years. This chapter cautions that global labor solidarity is both a process and a strategy but is not an end in itself. Further, it argues that global labor solidarity must be developed in conjunction with other global movements, including those of women, students, peasants, the urban poor, indigenous people, and more. Ultimately, however, I see strengths in this multiplicity of efforts, not weakness.

Why *Global* Labor Solidarity?

While editing a thematic issue for *WorkingUSA* on the subject of global labor solidarity,[3] I was asked by other labor activists why I was focusing on international labor issues: "Why not focus on North America, where our unions are in bad shape and really need help?"

Putting the choices this way—into an either/or dichotomy between the local and global—distorts the issue. The answer need not be one or the other, forcing researchers to focus on either the global or the local, but involves both and the interaction between the two. In other words, instead of either/or, a better approach is both/and.

That our unions in North America *are* in bad shape does not mean there is only one way to address the problem.

Business Unionism

Despite the massive amount of thinking, researching, and writing by both labor activists and scholars, particularly between 1995 and about 2012,[4] there has been all too little innovation that has taken place in our unions, especially in the United States (see Aronowitz 2014; Buhle 1999; see also Fletcher and Gapasin 2008).[5] It appears that not much of this relatively recent literature has been read by labor leaders, as so few have acted upon it. Nor does it seem a rash statement to say there is a huge gap between what scholars and activists have found and what the labor movement has done to take advantage of this recently developed knowledge.

Tied to this lack of interest in doing things differently so as to respond to changed situations or new social contexts, however, is similarity. With few exceptions—the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the United Electrical workers (UE) come immediately to mind, at least in some ways, but there may be a few others—trade unionism in the United States is generally practiced similarly; what we see is the implementation of "business unionism." Business unionism is not new in this country, as it goes back to the late 1800s, a specific product of craft unions within the American Federation of Labor (AFL). In many cases in the past, it has succeeded brilliantly, at least economically: unionized American workers once had the highest standard of living of any workers in the world.

The problem with business unionism, however, is that it is a very narrow form of trade unionism (see Roman and Arregui 2013, 103–105; Scipes 2003, 2014d), and it provides no vision other than "more of the same" to its members, despite decelerating rates of economic growth, massive expansion of US militarism, and worsening of economic and social conditions in the United States (as well as around the world). Business unionism focuses on improving the wages, benefits, and working conditions of its own members, with little or no consideration for other working people and how unions' struggles might affect them, negatively or positively. In fact, this form of unionism has not only alienated labor from many of its allies, but because it has often operated hierarchically within the union—with power generated at the top and then projected one way, downward toward the members—it has alienated many of its own

membership; relatively few former union members who have lost their jobs over the years, for any one of a myriad of reasons, have tried to unionize their subsequent workplaces (see Buhle 1999; Fletcher and Gapasin 2008).

This approach has led to a plunging rate of unionization. Private sector unionization in the United States at the end of 2014 (the latest data available) is at 6.6 percent, which is approximately what it was in the year 1900. Public sector unionism is at 35.7 percent. This gives a total unionization rate of 11.1 percent, about one-third of its high point in 1954.[6]

Arguably, the largest reason for this plunge in unionization rate is the ongoing and intensifying attacks on labor, especially by corporations and corporate-related interests.[7] This has been supported if not initiated by various levels of governments, especially at the territorial state level. These attacks on labor have been joined by a diminution of interest in working people and especially unions by politicians and the media, and particularly a lack of support for the work of the National Labor Relations Board and its efforts to provide a relatively fair process for unionization. This lack of interest has been coupled with direct attacks on labor by conservative politicians and judges. Combined with all of these changes—and more—is the escalating off-shoring of production, while replacing remaining workers with new technology whenever feasible.[8] Additionally, there are widening attacks on labor—such as in Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin (for the latter, see Buhle and Buhle eds. 2011; Yates ed. 2012). The labor movement in the United States has been under direct assault for more than forty years.[9]

However, what must also be put into the equation—one thing most labor advocates do not want to do—is that we must recognize the near-total failure of national-level labor leadership to counter this attack.[10] As Richard Roman and Edur Velasco Arregui point out,

> The union movement prepared the ground for its own defeat and that of the working class by an almost exclusive focus on the economic interests of its own members and the neglect, if not the abandonment, for fighting for class-wide interests. This model of unionism did not grasp the ideological and political character of the class war unleashed on the working class by neo-liberalism. Most unions continued to respond in narrow, sectoral ways that did not promote class-wide solidarity and consciousness. These policies isolated unionized workers from the non-unionized poor and precariously employed whose interests seemed marginal to unions. This narrow approach to workers' struggles unintentionally facilitated the divide-and-rule attacks of the corporate offense. It left both the organized and unorganized sectors of the working class vulnerable to isolation from each other, as the corporate offensive picked them off segment by segment, private versus public, "respectable" workers versus the stigmatized poor, citizen versus non-citizen. The narrow, economistic and sectional focus of most unions contributed to the demise of solidarity and class consciousness. (2013, 63)

These labor "leaders" have no idea how to stop or even restrict the escalating attacks on labor, much less how to counterattack. Their sole response is to depend even more heavily on the Democratic Party, whose leaders such as Bill Clinton and Barack Obama have either attacked labor (for example, through the North American Free

Trade Agreement [NAFTA]) or failed to keep promises to help the movement (for example, the Employee Free Choice Act).[11] However, not only have top-level labor leaders had no clue about how to mobilize their people to fight back and then take to the offense, but senior leadership has also collaborated—behind the backs, without the consent, but in the name of their members—with top-level governmental and corporate leaders against workers around the world, projecting and maintaining the US Empire against numerous challenges (Scipes 2010a, 2010b, 2015b; see also Bass 2012; Buhle 1999; Cox and Bass 2012; Rahman and Langford 2014; Sims 1992).

Thus, we have seen an almost complete immobilization of domestic labor, whether by attack, lack of imagination, or connivance. This has not only been a tragedy for unions and their members; it has also affected millions of people across our country.

It is time for activists, lower-level officials, and union staffers to join together to revive the US labor movement. We need to connect with and organize American workers and allies to build labor solidarity at home.[12] We also need to drop our sense of American superiority and unite with workers around the world, to learn from them, to support them and their struggles as we seek their support, and to build worker power globally to fight for a better world for all. It is clear that we can no longer wait for senior-level leadership to inspire workers to fight for a better world; we need to initiate change from below.

Domination: From the Individual to the Global

To make sense of the following, we have to shift gears and take a trip around the tree (as opposed to going in a straight line).

When people ask me the very common question “What is sociology?,” as a professional sociologist, I cannot provide a simple answer. The major reason is that any society (or societies) is too incredibly complex to answer simply. Also, sociologists look at different levels of society, and each has a different perspective. We also are not trained the same way—we’re trained at different times, and our theoretical approaches vary extensively. Plus, not only our professors but each of us bring our different skills, knowledge, and experiences to the task, as well as our various interpretations of each. In short, there is not one easy answer to the question.

Still, especially when teaching students who are starting out in the subject with an Introduction to Sociology course, we must directly address this issue. So, when I teach a course at this level, I point out that there are three levels of understanding: macrosociology, which looks at the big picture; mesosociology, which looks at the intermediate picture; and microsociology, which focuses on the smallest interactions, even as limited as between two people or between one person and her or his personal communication device. (These are relative terms, but they give some idea of the scope of interest for each level.) My work focuses on the macrosociological level—the “big picture.”[13]

With that delineated, I tell students that each person is located within a network of power relations that extend from the individual to the family, to the neighborhood and community, to the town or city, to the state or province, to the nation, and to the world. (These networks of power are represented by an expanding ring of circles, from the

individual outward, but one can add or subtract levels as deemed appropriate; there are approximately six different levels of power relations in which each person is embedded.) The impact of one or more of these power networks on any individual varies by the situation under consideration. Further, individuals are socialized to accept domination by each of these networks, initially by our parents and family members but also, over time, by school, church, peers, bosses, coworkers, and others. However, each person has the personal power to decide—at each level—whether to accept the socialization given us, reject it, or accept some and modify the rest. And yes, there are consequences to the decisions, but each person has the personal power to make these decisions.[14]

So, in short, there are approximately six different levels of power relations that affect each of us, and we can decide how we want to respond at each level. Obviously, the more people that challenge domination at any one level, the more room to maneuver at that level, especially as they consciously join together collectively, ultimately affecting the chances of developing counterpower against the status quo and increasing opportunities to make social change.

However, while it is unusual that differing levels of power are explicated this clearly, nonetheless and over time, people get a sense of different levels of power networks in any society and often understand how their lives are affected by each.

Unfortunately, though, we are cheated: even when delineated this clearly, rarely are people told about power networks at the global level. Think about how Americans are taught US history in school: we are taught that the United States is exceptional, that the United States is better than other countries and thus does not have to act with the standards and mores expected of other countries of the world. Historians even have a formal name for this: "American exceptionalism." And this presentation about the United States, this argument, is designed to separate Americans from the other peoples and countries of the world (see McCoy 2015).

The fact of the matter is that while the United States *is* an amazing country—as are many countries of the world—it is not exceptional in this sense: it has strengths and it has weaknesses, just like any other country. And by honestly looking at these strengths and weaknesses, we can compare this country to the strengths and weaknesses of others, and evaluate accordingly.

But one thing is for certain: *the United States is not separate from the other countries of the world.* The United States has been a global project since the arrival of the first Europeans until today, affecting the world and being affected by it.

Yet this is not taught in our schools, especially at the K–12 level, and probably not at most colleges and universities. So in effect, American students are denied knowledge of something that *should* be included in their educations: understanding the global level of power networks, because events at the global level often affect each of us on an individual level, even if they seem distant to us.[15]

However, there is even a larger issue when focusing on the global level: Americans in general have been taught to think of the United States as just another country, a geographically based nation-state, consisting of fifty territorial states. We are taught that the country has always been a benign power on the global level. However, the

reality is that especially since World War II, the United States has tried to dominate the world. Limited initially by the Soviet Union and its empire until it disintegrated in 1991, but generally unfettered afterward, the US elites were able to control the world until President George W. Bush invaded Iraq in March 2003.

This reality—seeking to dominate the world—means that it must be recognized that the United States is not just a country but is *the heartland of the US Empire*. Now, admittedly, the US Empire is different from the Roman Empire, which was based on conquering and incorporating territories; the United States has discovered that political and especially economic control of other countries is generally more efficient and less costly than territorial expansion and has operated accordingly (see, among others, Blum 2000, 2013; Chomsky 2003; Grandin 2007; Johnson 2000; Klein 2007; McCoy 2009; Nederveen Pieterse 1989, 2004, 2008; Robinson 1996; Scipes 1984, 2010a; Stone and Kuznick 2012).[16]

However, by hiding the existence of global level of power networks, US elites have been able to preclude discussion by most Americans about the United States' role globally: our incredible and uncontrolled spending on military equipment that is intended to kill—in 2014, the United States spent almost three times as much as China and almost as much that year as the next thirteen closest military "competitors" *combined*, and at a level comparable in real terms to that of the late 1980s, before the Soviet Union collapsed (Perlo-Freeman et al. 2015), as well as the global surveillance networks (as revealed by Edward Snowden) and US willingness to act as the police force of the world. This also means the vast resources, especially money and people, used for global dominance cannot be used to address needs and concerns of Americans, such as providing jobs, quality health care, and affordable education; repairing infrastructure; and dealing with climate change. So, of course, US elites do not want most Americans to consider the United States in a global context, as most people might not accept the political, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual costs of the US Empire,[17] and the elites fear the resulting dissent that might emerge domestically should this happen.

In other words, US elites do not want Americans to ever think about the global-level power networks, but should they do so nonetheless, Americans should never try to understand post–World War II US behavior through the concept of "empire," even though it is the most appropriate approach. I disagree. Not only should Americans recognize these global power networks but we cannot realistically understand US global behavior since World War II without using this concept of the US Empire. Further—as mentioned above—efforts to try to dominate the rest of the world have had deleterious effects, especially upon those attacked but also on Americans and particularly on working people in this country. In short, the United States has the resources either to try to dominate the rest of the world or to take care of Americans. But it cannot do both (see Scipes 2009).

Accordingly, I reject the elites' approach. Instead, we need to reclaim and understand global power networks, using the concept of empire and recognizing that building global labor solidarity is *natural*, not an aberration. In other words, *of course* we should build labor solidarity, globally as well as locally, as it is one of the best

ways to challenge empire. To be able to do this, however, we must understand, really understand, the concept of imperialism.

Imperialism: A Conceptualization[18]

The term "imperialism" generally refers to dominative relations between countries that take place at the nation-state level. These dominative relations are often hidden by euphemistic language used in academia and certainly in public discourse—such as "mutual defense"—that hides the nature of these relationships. Nonetheless, imperialism is based on the understanding that all nations do not have equal political-economic power, that they have differing levels of power, and that the stronger dominates or will try to dominate the weaker when the weaker does not acquiesce to the stronger on its own. Traditionally, this domination takes place specifically across nation-state borders—as distinct from domination within the same nation-state—and has developed for the benefit of the specific nation-state that is dominating one or more other countries. Another way to think about this is as an oppressor-oppressed relationship between different nations.

It has been the Marxists who are generally seen as having developed the concept of imperialism to the greatest degree. Lenin, in his important theoretical understanding, claims that imperialism is "the highest stage of capitalism" (Lenin 1916/1987).

However, this approach collapses the motivation for imperialism to economic gain; that is, it approaches imperialism economistically.[19] Additionally, Lenin and subsequent Marxist writers have located imperialism at the level of the nation-state only; they have argued imperialism results when one nation-state dominates another.

The pathbreaking work of Netherlands-born scholar Jan Nederveen Pieterse challenges Marxist interpretations, arguing that imperialism is *domination extended across political community borders* (Nederveen Pieterse 1989). And he develops the concept of imperialism far beyond that of the Marxists.

A political community usually refers to a nation-state; however, while including nation-states in this category, Nederveen Pieterse's understanding of imperialism extends beyond the nation-state level. He recognizes that because of external domination during past history, groups who share common culture, traditions, languages, and political organization (that is, "political communities") may have been incorporated within the boundaries of other political communities. Examples of this include Native American nations having been incorporated into the United States and Canada, the Palestinians into Israel, and the Kurds into Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq, and certainly this is also true of other indigenous peoples around the world. Thus, instead of ignoring these peoples or making them irrelevant by confining the understanding of imperialism to nation-states only, Nederveen Pieterse broadens the conception of imperialism to include the domination of one political community over another, and this can exist within the current boundaries of a nation-state: these relationships across political-community borders are based in unequal power relations, with the stronger dominating the weaker.

In addition, Nederveen Pieterse extends the concept of imperialism "vertically" to include different levels of domination. He not only focuses on dominative relations at

the nation-state level, but he also includes dominative relations at levels higher and lower than the nation-state level. For example, at the suprastate level (at a level higher than nation-states / political communities), dominative relations can be established, such as between the United Nations and people of any particular country (such as UN "peacekeeping forces" and Haitian slum dwellers). Likewise, dominative relations can be established at a substate level (at a lower level), such as between a labor organization in the United States and labor organizations in other countries. In other words, Nederveen Pieterse not only expands the concept of imperialism on a horizontal axis through broadening it to include domination across political community borders, but he also extends it vertically by including different levels of domination.

Further, Nederveen Pieterse's is not an economistic view of imperialism. It recognizes that the motivation for imperialism has at least two possible origins: yes, like the Marxists have argued, imperialism can be initiated for economic gain—that is, profit. Additionally, though, Nederveen Pieterse recognizes that imperial domination also can be implemented to achieve political power in the global realm, such as through geostrategic positioning and through mobilizing and controlling social forces in other countries for the benefit of the imperialist force. And while these two aspects of imperialism can be separated for analytical purposes, in reality, they are often in some combination. Thus, the issue is not a dichotomous categorization and choice between economics or politics but rather is a search for primacy at any one time or situation: in some situations, economic motivations may be primary with political ones secondary, and in others, political control may be primary and economic ones secondary.

At the same time, however, the concept of imperialism is not limited merely to politics or economics. It can refer to any activities that seek to dominate other groups across political community boundaries, and this can be on the cultural level, the spiritual level, the social level, and so on.

In short, Nederveen Pieterse's conceptualization of imperialism is much more sophisticated and, as shown below, provides a more robust understanding of imperialism than do Marxist explanations; it is the understanding used herein.[20]

Practical Consequences of Understanding Imperialism

Again, imperialism is based on the understanding that not all political communities have equal political-economic power, that they have differing levels of power, and that the stronger dominates or will try to dominate the weaker when the weaker does not acquiesce to the stronger on its own. This term is not being used rhetorically but to describe empirical reality (again, see Nederveen Pieterse 1989).

This understanding—that the term "imperialism" is used to describe empirical reality—has practical consequences. It gets to the heart of the differentiation between countries seen as "developed" and those seen as "developing."

Analysts commonly divide all countries in the world into two categories: developed

and developing countries—and while these relationships are in flux, recognizing this relationship is one way to begin. The so-called developed countries are those of Western Europe, the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, and their respective populations have a qualitative higher standard of living than those of the so-called developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Why do a few countries have a higher standard of living than most? The reason is that, through military might and colonization, they stole the natural resources, raw materials, and, in some cases, the peoples of these militarily weaker lands and brought them back to the imperialist home country to be used for the latter's development.[21] Along with this, the imperialist countries forced colonized countries to provide military bases and troops to help maintain imperial domination in subjugated and neighboring countries.[22]

Accordingly, for example, the United States industrialized, as quickly and thoroughly as it did, off the stolen lands of Native Americans (and later those of Mexico, Hawaii, and Alaska) and immense profits that were derived off the labor and bodies of African slaves (for the latter, see Baptist 2014), allowing capitalists to build factories and provide millions of jobs for European immigrants, who then were superexploited to create huge profits for consumption and further investments.[23] Out of the great wealth generated by these processes, some was channeled into raising the general standards of living—although delivered on a racially stratified basis—which included providing for public education, public health, roads and highways, and so on, as well as later financing the most powerful military and dominating force (including the Central Intelligence Agency) the world has ever seen.

However, this wealth was not shared to any great extent with working people in this country until after World War II. It was only after industrial unionism was established in the 1930s and '40s, and then striking to demonstrate that this wealth *had* to be shared if the corporations wanted the production to expand globally—more than 116,000,000 days of production were lost to strikes in the first year after the war, as North America–wide strikes took place in auto, steel, meatpacking, and electrical parts industries, along with similar strikes in particular firms across the United States and Canada, and general strikes took place in cities like Stamford, Connecticut, and Oakland, California (Lipsitz 1994; Murolo and Chitty 2001; Preis 1964/1992; see Scipes 2009)—that labor established itself as a socioeconomic power in US life.

During the post–World War II period, and especially after the US-supported military coup in Brazil in 1964, US capital—later followed by Western European and Japanese capital—expanded into the third world on a qualitatively more extensive basis than ever before, initially targeting Latin America. (This was in addition to expansion beyond the previously high levels existing in other already developed countries.)

This influx of capital—with capitalist investors seeking enhanced profit opportunities and access to raw materials and natural resources, as well as being an effort by certain governments to soak up excess labor, precluding or reducing chances that people would take the Cuban revolutionary option, and to prevent expansion of

revolutionary states—led to the further accumulation of local capital, which in turn, and often with foreign partners, financed industrialization in some of these developing countries (see Petras and Engbarth 1988). The exporting of capital expanded with a shift into a number of countries in Southeast Asia in the 1980s and then into China in the 1990s (see Dicken 2003; McMichael 2012).[24]

This large-scale entry of capital into a number of these developing countries has, in turn, resulted in these countries developing economically to the extent that some of their corporations can compete today with corporations in developed countries, both at home and, in some cases, in the developed countries.[25] These developing countries also are showing—especially when acting in concert—that they can politically challenge the ambitions of the developed countries, as was seen in the case of the defeat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas in 2005, which had been proposed by the United States, along with Canada and Mexico (see Dobrusin 2014, 2016).

While trade unions have long existed in various developing countries' ports, railroads, and shipping industries (see, for example, Cohen, Gutkind, and Brazier 1979), this intensified development had led to the expansion of independent unions in a number of countries such as Argentina, Brazil, the Philippines, South Africa, and South Korea (see, for example, Southall ed., 1988; for the Philippines, see Scipes 1996, 1999).[26]

This combination of economic development in some developing countries, and changes in relations—at least in part—between developing and developed countries, along with expansion of unions within and across these countries, has led to a shift in power relations within the global labor movement.[27]

Using the empirical reality of imperialism as a starting point to help understand the global situation today, and after delineating the different levels of domination extending across political community boundaries around the globe, we now need to try to understand how workers and their organizations have tried to overcome these divisions to support workers around the world.

Building Global Labor Solidarity

There is no theory of global labor solidarity to date, so what people who are trying to build international labor solidarity are working from is a moral prescription, initially made by the French socialist Flora Tristan but more famously by Marx and Engels: "Workers of the World, Unite!" (Armbruster-Sandoval 2013, 614). It is time to develop this further.

Historical Development of "International" Labor Solidarity

Before discussing what global labor solidarity is today, it seems important to at least acknowledge understandings of it in the past. For that, we turn to the work of Peter Waterman (1998), who approaches the subject via the concept of internationalism. Waterman argues that internationalism developed in response to capitalists' efforts to cross national borders, usually to try to undercut workers' efforts to collectively organize and limit or prohibit capitalist production in the home country. Workers organized across national borders to keep the capitalists from playing workers in one

country against workers in another, harming workers in both countries—hence the term "international labor solidarity."

Most forms of this cross-border solidarity took place in Europe, at least initially. Yet as worker activists came to understand that capitalism expanded through colonial subjugation and acquisition into those countries of the so-called developing world of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East—and here, Marxists played a key role in developing this understanding (see especially Lenin 1916/1987; but see also Post 1997)—then these activists, and their organizations, recognized the importance of building solidarity between workers in the so-called developed countries and those in the developing countries. As Ken Post (1997, 1) so well put it, "the 'colonial and semi-colonial' periphery [that is, the developing countries—KS] . . . still remains the soft underbelly of an otherwise triumphant capitalism." Accordingly, [28]

> In the nineteenth century, Marxists presented labour and socialist internationalism *as* internationalism, or at least as the *primary* internationalism, with all others subordinate to it. Anti-capitalist internationalism was understood as the negation of nationalism. . . . The aim of such an internationalism was the creation of a world socialist community, understood as the desirable and necessary future society, one which would replace hostile relations between nation-states with peaceful co-operation. It was understood that there was one bearer of such internationalism, the industrial proletariat. (Waterman 1998, 1)

After critiquing the statist turn that this took in the twentieth century, Waterman (1998, 2) then suggests that we could have an alternative concept, "drawing on the nineteenth- and twentieth-century values of liberty, equality and solidarity." And he argues quite strongly for the creation of new internationalisms.[29]

Waterman gives us an important understanding when he argues that "a contemporary internationalism—based on recognition of the interconnections between capitalism, racism, sexism, statism, etc.—would need to be at least implicitly critical of all of these" (1998, 51). However, his most important point regards "solidarity":

> By solidarity, I mean a community of interests, feelings and actions. This is the more general ethical value and human relationship underlying internationalism. International solidarity should be taken to mean not only an expression or striving for human *identity*, but also *reciprocity* (mutual advantage), *affinity* (shared feelings), *complementarity* (differential contribution), and *substitutionism* (taking the part or place of the other). (Waterman 1998, 52)[30]

In other words, the decision to act in solidarity with workers across political community boundaries can be across any political community boundary and is not limited to only imperialist country boundaries; these decisions to build solidarity can be made by workers in any political community and can be made toward workers at any political level.[31] However, individuals who work to build cross-boundary solidarity can also work to build communities of solidarity in their own home country to create solidarity with workers and allies at home, while eventually seeking to win organizational support for the project of building global labor solidarity (see Nastovski 2016).

Accordingly, recognizing these relationships can develop in any direction, we need

a change in terminology. Previous efforts to build cross-border labor solidarity, especially in the post–World War II period, have been done under the rubric of *international* labor solidarity. When this has happened, much of this has been between two labor movements at a time and has generally proceeded from the stronger to the weaker, in a clientelistic manner rather than a solidaristic one, and this has generally been one-way, from labor movements in the Global North toward labor movements in the Global South (see Waterman 1998). And that is when the northern labor movements were trying to be helpful, at least on some level, and not just trying to dominate them (see, again, Scipes 2010a, 2010b, 2015b).

I believe that we are in a new period when labor solidarity can include multiple labor movements, workers' organizations, and their allies; that it can originate in the South or the North; that these can be directed toward either southern or northern labor movements, workers' organizations, and their allies; and can be based on respectful, solidaristic relations (see Scipes 2014a, 150–151). Accordingly, I argue that these efforts should be considered as *global* labor solidarity to differentiate them from previous efforts. Following, therefore, I suggest we change our terminology for this cross-border solidarity from *international* labor solidarity to *global* labor solidarity.

Motivations of Solidarity

Even though we argue for the use of the term "global labor solidarity," we have to address the concept of solidarity. Waterman (1998, 52) defines solidarity as "a community of interests, feelings and actions." This does not seem sufficient: it seems to be what Waterman would like it to be (that is, a normative prescription)—and perhaps what each of us would like it to be—but the definition leaves out what it often is. In other words, I see there being a continuum of motivations for building solidarity, and these range from pure self-interest to pure altruism, with many in-between points.[32]

However, if one reads Waterman closely, there is an implicit assumption included in his definition: he writes as though solidarity, this "community of interests," already exists. This idea needs to be reconsidered. Following Alberto Melucci (1989, 1995), I argue that solidarity must be *constructed*, and not assumed to be already existent.[33] Accordingly, one never reaches a solid state of solidarity-ness, but that energy must continuously be devoted toward creating solidarity or, at least, toward maintaining it (see Scipes 2012, 304–305).

Nonetheless, there are many calls for so-called solidarity that are designed to meet one's own self-interest (whether as an individual or as an organization) and have nothing to do with altruism or even helping each other out. Basically, these are pleas for assistance on one's own terms, with no intention of reciprocity: "Please help me pull my chestnuts out of the fire, and I'll be eternally grateful." And then after the crisis ends: "Thank you very much." We can label this kind of solidarity as "self-interested solidarity."[34]

Mutual solidarity suggests that we will each present our views of the situation, including honestly recognizing our own self-interest and deciding that we can gain more—including developing feelings of satisfaction through having helped someone

else while helping ourselves—by working together for our mutual benefit. Mutual solidarity also enables continuation in hard times. Perhaps by working together we can gain more of what we want than we can by working on our own. And by working together, not only can we get more of what we want, but we can also build trust over time so that we can again establish mutual solidarity in the future. In other words, development of mutual solidarity enables us to learn who we can trust, it allows us to be confident that we won't get used in the future, and it gives us confidence over time that we can speak freely and know it won't get used against us.

And finally, there is "altruistic solidarity," where one sacrifices one's self-interest for the good of others. This does not often happen in the real world, although obviously it is very inspiring to see it when it happens. This type of solidarity, even when it happens, is often limited by one's collective evaluation of how much can be given, and of course, that is often dependent on the understanding of the situation in which it takes place.[35]

A clear example of this took place among members of ILWU Local 10 in San Francisco in 1984. After much internal organizing and education within Local 10 about apartheid and the situation at that time in southern Africa, members collectively decided they would refuse to handle any cargo headed for or shipped from apartheid South Africa. After a Dutch ship, the *Nedloyd Kimberly*, docked with cargo for South Africa, longshoremen unloaded other cargo on the ship, but they refused to unload the South Africa–bound cargo, each worker sacrificing a couple of hundred dollars in pay. However, when the shipping company took the case to court and the judge threatened the local union with fines of ten thousand dollars per day for each day the cargo was not worked, the longshoremen decided to unload the ship; the limits of their altruistic solidarity had been reached (Cole 2013; see also Scipes 1985).[36]

Solidarity Across Different Political Levels of Domination

Let us turn around Nederveen Pieterse's thinking and argue that global labor solidarity can be built at different political levels, including the suprastate, nation-state, and substate levels. What does this mean in reality? At the suprastate level, this could be a national-level labor center,[37] or a group of labor centers could seek to build global labor solidarity by pressuring global organizations (for example, the International Trade Union Confederation, the International Labour Organization, or one or more Global Union Federations [GUFs]) and multistate-based regional labor organizations (for example, the European Trade Union Congress) to act in support of workers and unions in other political communities.

At the nation-state level, this could include a national labor center supporting one or more labor centers in other political communities. An example could be where a national labor center supports struggles against oppressive national legislation in the "other" political community.

At the substate level, this could be a union or unions supporting workers and unions who are being oppressed in another political community. Here the work of the United Steelworkers in North America supporting Colombian unions that are under violent attack is inspiring, as has been the work of the ILWU in refusing to load and unload

ships carrying goods and weapons to oppressive states (for example, apartheid South Africa, Pinochet's Chile, and so on) or South African dockworkers refusing to handle Chinese ships carrying weapons for Zimbabwe (Cole 2013).[38] Included in this category is the long-standing work of the United Electrical workers (UE) with those in other countries, especially in Mexico (see Hathaway 2000).

Scope of Substate Global Labor Solidarity: Multiple Actors

However, it is at the substate level that things get most interesting: our understanding of creating global labor solidarity includes actions by unions or bureaucratic labor organizations, but *it cannot be confined to them* (see Scipes 2014a; see also Featherstone 2012); hence, I stress global *labor* solidarity instead of global trade-union solidarity.

Broad efforts to build global labor solidarity have emerged, developed by a wide range of actors, both those within unions as well as those outside of unions, including labor and political and religious activists. These efforts can be referred to as efforts to build "shop-floor internationalism" or "grassroots labor internationalism" (see Bacon 2016; Dobrusin 2016; Jungehülsing 2016; Nastovski 2014, 2016; Scipes 1988, 2012; Waterman 1990, 1998; Zweig 2005).[39] Accordingly, we must broaden our understanding to include efforts such as rank-and-file and staff initiatives from within unions, worker/labor activist initiatives outside of unions, progressive activist initiatives initiated to help workers, and more. These efforts could include establishing cross-border alliances of unions, workers' organizations, and worker solidarity groups, either in coalition or separately, with workers and their organizations in other political communities. These include solidarity campaigns, in which workers and activists in one country support the efforts by workers to establish their own unions (see Bacon 2004; Williams 2003). Examples include networks such as the Southern Initiative on Globalization and Trade Union Rights,[40] the *LabourStart* / UnionBook network, the European dockers' network,[41] Asia Monitor Resource Centre and Australia Asia Worker Links—each of which connects worker organizations and unions across Asia—as well as the Maquila Solidarity Network (United States, Canada, and Mexico) and the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras (United States and Mexico) (see Vogel 2006 for an account about the latter). Other examples include international solidarity campaigns such as those among garment workers and consumers (Armbruster-Sandoval 2005; Brooks 2007; Kumar and Mahoney 2014; Ross 2004) and efforts to establish relationships with workers by putting material pressure on their oppressors, as Canadian workers support Palestinian workers through developing the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement against Israel's apartheid regime (Nastovski 2014).[42] Additional examples include establishing and maintaining workers' support committees, such as the Philippine Workers' Support Committee, which has enabled information to be passed from the Philippines to supporters, while helping supporters arrange visits in that country or sponsor visits by Filipino labor leaders and activists to the United States.[43]

In addition to these organizational networks—and we have to recognize the internal communications that take place between and among these unions and worker-support

organizations—there are also external communication nodes and their related networks, where information is passed more widely, both to unions and their members as well as to activists globally.[44] Two that played important roles in the 1980s—*International Labour Reports* and *Newsletter of International Labour Studies*—are no longer with us,[45] although their founders and staff members are still actively building labor solidarity around the world. The Asia Monitor Resource Center has played an important role in communicating in Asia, as has Australia Asia Workers Links. *LabourStart* and its associated social network, UnionBook, have played an exemplary role in communicating and mobilizing labor activists to support a growing number of labor struggles around the world.

A very important initiative that has not received the attention that I believe it deserves has been the conscious effort by the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) Labor Center of the Philippines to build global labor solidarity. In an effort unique in the world, the KMU has built an elaborate six-part program involving leaders, staff, and members that is used to build support for the KMU and workers and their unions worldwide, to strengthen its own organization internally, and to communicate its vision of trade unionism globally, as well as to share news and information about labor struggles particularly in the Philippines, though not limited to that country. Centerpiece of this project is their annual International Solidarity Affair (ISA), where workers and union leaders are invited to spend ten days every April–May with Filipino workers, including both formal programs in Manila and across the country, and visitors are introduced to the day-to-day reality of Filipino workers. The ISA has been held every year since 1984 (see Scipes 2000 for building and communicating international labor solidarity including the ISA; see Scipes 2014b/2016 for an article about what can be learned from the KMU in general; and see Scipes 2015a for an account of the 2015 ISA).

In addition to all of this, there are efforts by activists to build global labor solidarity. One of the most developed projects in North America is US Labor Against the War (USLAW), which has done exemplary work in building solidarity between American and Iraqi trade unionists (Scipes 2012, 313–314; Zweig 2005) and has now advanced a program for a new foreign policy for the AFL-CIO (Zweig 2014, 2016). Canadian workers have built important organizations to campaign in solidarity with workers in South Africa during the 1980s—through the South African Congress of Trade Unions Solidarity Committee (SSC)—and today through Labour for Palestine (L4P) (Nastovski 2014, 2016). American labor activists have also built the Worker to Worker Solidarity Committee (WWSC) to campaign against the foreign policy program of the AFL-CIO, and particularly its connection with the US government's National Endowment for Democracy (Scipes 2010a, 96–105; 2012, 314–316).

But another realm of work has been by artists and especially writers—both those who are and are not activists, some of whom are scholars and some not, some of whom have been doing this a long time and some just beginning—to build, understand, and communicate global labor solidarity.[46] This obviously includes myself as well as writers cited herein. Included in this are those who write about unions and labor struggles globally, so as to inform people of these projects. Others do so to

analyze efforts and some even to develop theory about how we can advance these projects. And still others write to expose misbehavior and oppressive behaviors of labor leaders who act against the interest of workers in other parts of the world.

Other artists also contribute to this work—particularly videographers/filmmakers, photographers, photojournalists, and other visual artists. Yet there are also singer-songwriters who travel around the world, crossing borders and spanning worlds to communicate.

In short, this new global *labor* solidarity transcends traditional trade-union internationalism/solidarity.[47] Central to this is the recognition that "the politics of coalition and alliance are evidently and increasingly critical to the future of trade-union and labor internationalism" (Waterman and Wills 2001, 307), but I argue this is true in expanded form. In other words, instead of joining the various efforts and confining them into a unified whole under a specific concept (such as "socialism") (Waterman and Wills 2001), I argue that we can build unity and power by finding more and more opportunities to connect across political community boundaries, and out of these global connections, we can seek a project determined by all of us.

Different Levels of Global Labor Solidarity

Although Peter Waterman advanced "Thirteen Propositions" toward building international labor solidarity (Waterman 1998, 72–73; reprinted in Scipes 2014a, 148–149), I have challenged his smorgasbord of proposals (Scipes 2000; 2014a, 148–150), while still appreciating Waterman's clarity and sophistication:

> Rather than limit our understanding of labor internationalism to a "shopping list" of propositions, such as the [thirteen] that Waterman advances but that imply none are any more important than others, it seems helpful to recognize that there are different levels of labor internationalism and they should be prioritized. By suggesting that some efforts are more developed (or even more desirable!) than others, I am not suggesting that those less desirable should be negated—as in saying, if they don't meet my standards, they're "bourgeois," harmful or even worse—but rather it implies that they should be appreciated for what they accomplish, while suggesting more can be done.
>
> With that understanding, I suggest there are three levels of labor internationalism, which I list from the lowest to the highest, although they are on a continuum and not discrete. And each successive level incorporates efforts at the lower level(s). The first [and lowest] level is where workers cooperate with each other across international boundaries: this can include everything from letter writing and donating funds up to and including taking direct action (sabotage, "hot cargoing"/black-listing of goods and equipment, strikes) in support of other workers' labor and democratic struggles. The second level is where workers help people in the "target" country change their social order: thus workers supporting social movement unions which are specifically fighting to change their social order; workers supporting different social sectors such as women who are struggling to change the social order, as well as workers supporting liberation struggles as a whole, would be forms of this level of labor internationalism. And the third level is where workers in one country struggle to change their own social order so as to be able to both support peoples in other countries struggling to change their respective social orders and to live in solidarity and on a more equitable level with people throughout the world.

> Approaching labor internationalism in this manner recognizes the reality of imperialist (oppressor/oppressed; dominator/dominated) power relations in the world and suggests that ending them is better than allowing them to continue to exist. And approaching labor internationalism in this manner validates the struggles by workers in an oppressed nation—such as Brazil, the Philippines or South Africa—as being just as important as those by workers in an oppressor nation—such as the United States—when they struggle to change their respective social order: by challenging their social order to no longer allow itself to be dominated by others or to dominate others, workers confront dominative power which is ultimately the very basis for their own subjugation. (Scipes 2000)[48]

We need to learn from the approaches both of Waterman and myself. The three levels I delineated allow us to understand similarities among, and differences between, solidarity efforts. Accordingly, we see that most global labor solidarity today takes place at the first, or lowest, level. That being said, however, this allows us to address the propositions put forth by Waterman.

We must apply this thinking to the larger social context today. As stated above, new labor movements are currently emerging across the Global South; this is happening in countries as disparate as China, Egypt, and Iran. New developments are taking place within labor movements in places such as Bangladesh, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Mexico, Pakistan, South Africa, and Venezuela.

Accordingly, we can see that the larger sense of Waterman's proposals is already being made real: the struggle of workers is increasingly seen in a global context, and links by workers and their organizations across political community borders *are* being made, and to a greater and greater extent (see also Evans 2014). And as the articles in the special issue of *WorkingUSA* (Scipes ed., 2014) have shown, the relationships are changing: no longer dependent upon "Northern" labor movements for resources or, perhaps more important, ideas, the "Southern" labor movements are emerging and are trying to find ways to build real labor solidarity across the globe.[49] Concurrently, however, activists in a growing number of Northern countries are pushing for their unions, and ultimately their nation-states, to create new, nonoppressive relationships with those of the Global South.

Thus, workers, their organizations, and their allies around the world are seeking new ways to build global labor solidarity and are not waiting for the big boys and girls at the top of labor to come save them; they have learned clearly that no one will save them but themselves, acting in solidarity with their brothers and sisters from around the world (Scipes 2014a, 150–151; see also Ness ed. 2014 and Van der Walt 2014).

Perhaps most important of his "Thirteen Propositions," Waterman argues for mutual respect and shared resources, including political support, information, and ideas.[50] This, in fact, gets back to the point made above: there is more interaction, more sharing, and more political support back and forth than ever before. What I think is new, however, is that a growing number of activists are getting involved, whether joining and working within established international networks or creating their own, and not waiting for the international office of their union to mobilize them. The work developed by the Canadian activists in challenging Israeli apartheid is exemplary, as is that of USLAW. And I would add that the communications and solidarity work being

done by Eric Lee and his *LabourStart*/UnionBook network are exciting and commendable, as is the work being done by Australia Asia Worker Links and Asia Monitor Resource Centre.

And now that we have considered historical and contemporary efforts to build global labor solidarity—discussing motivations of solidarity, solidarity across different political levels of domination, the multiple actors involved in substate global labor solidarity, and different levels of global labor solidarity—it is time to provide a theoretical understanding of global labor solidarity.

Global Labor Solidarity: A Theoretical Understanding

Global labor solidarity is an act, or an ongoing set of actions, by workers, their organizations, and their allied organizations, as well as by writers, artists, and other activists, to support workers across political community borders in their efforts to enhance workers' lives, wages, working conditions, and sometimes, their very existence as *determined by those affected*. To strengthen the power and well-being of workers globally, workers must develop solidarity across political community borders *in addition* to developing solidarity with workers of their own country; global labor solidarity does not undercut solidarity by workers in the same country but instead develops the power, well-being, and knowledge of workers globally.[51]

This solidarity must be on the basis of mutual respect and support, which precludes concepts of clientelism; a unidirectional flow of ideas, money, and other resources; and domination by one labor movement over another (that is, labor imperialism). This solidarity can emerge from either Southern or Northern workers or their organizations, can include multiple labor organizations, and can be directed toward either Southern or Northern workers and their organizations. As indicated above, we should now utilize the term "*global* labor solidarity" to replace "*international* labor solidarity."

This solidarity may be between workers and organizations on the same level of political organization or between workers and organizations at different levels of political organization.

This solidarity may be motivated by self-interest, mutuality, or altruism.

There are a number of *types* of global labor solidarity, with references to illuminative items, although this list will probably need to be expanded as we learn from struggles that take place in the future:[52] This global labor solidarity has helped and is helping workers, their organizations, and their allies in their struggles to:

- Establish and maintain unions and to improve wages, working conditions, security, and other workplace-related issues—see Armbruster-Sandoval 2005; Bacon 2004, 2016; Barchiesi 2001; Evans 2010, 2014; Hathaway 2000; Kumar and Mahoney 2014; Lambert and Webster 2001; Moody 1997; Ness 2016; Ness ed., 2014; Novelli 2011; Rahman and Langford 2014; Roman and Velasco Arregui 2013; Ross 2004; Ryan 2016; Waterman 1998. See also Herod 2000,[53] and for a very interesting series of case studies, see Bieler and Lindberg eds., 2011.

- Against common multinational or transnational corporations—see Anner 2003; Armbruster-Sandoval 2005; Bacon 2016; Bronfenbrenner and Juravich 1999; Bronfenbrenner ed., 2007; Brooks 2007; Evans 2010, 2014; Herod 1995, 2000, 2001, 2003; Johns 1998; McCallum 2013; Young and Sierra Becerra 2014.
- To improve the lives of workers and their families outside of the workplace, such as in their communities—see Bacon 2004, 2016; Dobrusin 2016; Jungehülsing 2016; Lethbridge 2011; Lindell 2011.
- Against global and regional political-economic plans (for example, NAFTA and the Free Trade Area of the Americas) or the "Commodities Consensus" and other projects that are deemed detrimental to their self-interests (as defined by them)—see Bacon 2004; Dobrusin 2014, 2016; Dreiling and Robinson 1998; Stillerman 2003.
- Against militarism and invasion—see Zweig 2005, 2014, 2016 for work of USLAW; see Cole 2013 for a discussion of black African longshore workers' boycott of a Chinese ship carrying arms and ammunition to Zimbabwe in 2008.
- Against imperial activities—see work of WWSC in Scipes 2010a (particularly 78–82), 2012;[54] see also Nastovski 2016.
- To support oppressed peoples—see Nastovski 2014, 2016 for L4P and the SSC; for labor support committees, see Waterman 1998, 132–136; for activities by the ILWU, see Cole 2013; Scipes 1985, 2014c.
- To liberate themselves—see Baskin 1991; Friedman 1987; Kraak 1993; MacShane, Plaut, and Ward 1984; Scipes 1996; Seidman 1994; Waterman 1998; and
- Supporting workers' efforts through innovative legal strategies and tactics and utilization of treaty side agreements to try to protect workers from victimization through legal and political institutions (regarding the NAFTA side agreements, see Kay 2005, 736–742; Stillerman 2003, 592–595; Williams 2003,[55] and for impact of struggle against NAFTA on subsequent trade negotiations, see Kay 2015).

It is exciting to recognize that there have been a considerable number of efforts, and so many types of efforts, to build global labor solidarity in the late 1990s through the early 2000s, despite the general lack of knowledge about these efforts outside of those involved with specific projects.

Working people and some unions, along with progressive allies, have been reaching across political community boundaries for a number of years to try to develop global labor solidarity with other workers, their organizations, and their allies. Some of these projects have been established by labor confederations, international unions, and GUFs; some by national unions and labor centers; and a growing number by union members and staffers as well as by those outside of the labor movement—what can be called "grassroots labor internationalism" (Scipes 1988; Waterman 1998)—each of whom want to help build a better world. The increasing willingness to do so is hopeful.

A Caution

While workers building global labor solidarity has primarily been presented in this chapter in a positive manner, a caution must be added: global labor solidarity is a process, and a strategy, for improving working people's lives around the planet; it is

aimed at increasing workers' power to determine their lives, both inside and outside the workplace. But it does not provide the goal to which workers collectively aspire.

That discussion, which started in the 1840s in Europe, continues.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that we cannot confine efforts to build solidarity to national-level projects, but that we need to expand our efforts globally, and I then discussed efforts to build global labor solidarity. I did this by presenting a conceptualization of imperialism that surpasses Marxist understandings, examining previous efforts to build international labor solidarity, and then discussing motivations for solidarity, levels of solidarity, and then scope of substate global labor solidarity, recognizing multiple actors. I also advanced differing levels of global labor solidarity. And finally, I presented a theoretical understanding of global labor solidarity, and delineated nine different types of global labor solidarity that exist to date.

However, while arguing that any future alternative has to be developed from a global perspective, and be developed democratically from the grassroots, I point out that this alternative cannot be imposed from above. Following Waterman (1998), I argue that development of an alternative must be done in conjunction with other global movements, such as women's, students', peasants', the urban poor, the indigenous, and more, seeking liberation for all—but recognizing that what that means is still to be determined. Finally, I have argued that any alternative must be done in conjunction with the planet, not separately.

CHAPTER 2

Worker-to-Worker: A Transformative Model of Solidarity—Lessons from Grassroots International Labor Solidarity in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s

Katherine Nastovski

Solidarity is not an act of charity but mutual aid between forces fighting for the same objective.

—Samora Machel, a leader of the Mozambique Liberation Front and first president of postcolonial/liberated Mozambique (Saskatoon Solidarity Committee 1981)

International labor solidarity has a long and varied history, encompassing practices within the organized labor movement, other working-class organizations, and independent worker action. It has taken varied forms, institutionalized and not, led by political parties, by rank-and-file workers, or by leaders and staff of particular unions. It has also included various kinds of practices, from direct material support to direct action in the workplace to supporting the strategy of a particular struggle by using pressure points, to creating sanctuaries, to demanding acceptance of refugees, to fighting for political prisoners and lobbying governmental officials.

The way workers have acted in solidarity with workers outside their national borders has been an important phenomenon for activists on the broad left since the time of Marx and the establishment of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International). David Featherstone (2012) discusses the actions of British workers that inspired the First International (1864–1876).

British workers risked their own livelihoods to uphold the cotton blockade aimed at ending slavery in the United States. These solidarity actions, Featherstone argues, were so inspiring because they entailed conscious action by British workers that directly went against their own economic interests. Drawing from this example, he proposes that solidarity is a transformative relation "that shapes different ways of challenging oppression and inequalities" and produces new configurations of political relations that rethink the boundaries of working-class political practice (Featherstone 2012, 5–8).

It is this potential for risking one's own immediate particular needs to support a broader struggle that is so significant about the actions of the British textile workers. This happened despite immediate local interests and despite ideological barriers such as hegemonic ideas about race, gender, capitalism, and nation. The class consciousness exemplified in this action is something that scholars like Richard Hyman (1975, 60) have noted is so crucial for a more militant union action and to

overcome various forms of sectionalism that have weighed down the power and strength of many workers' movements.

Rebecca Johns, like Featherstone, draws from the example of the cotton blockade to theorize the implications of international solidarity action. She argues that solidarity can be transformative when workers in one place act to help others without expectation of reciprocity or that they themselves will benefit (Johns 1998, 256; Ryland and Sadler 2008, 475). These acts of solidarity entail the domination of class interests "over interests that are spatially derived and rooted," hence operating outside of the logic of nationalism and imperialism (Johns 1998, 256). It is this transformative potential, the way solidarity can be a site for building strength and capacity to resist and for challenging hegemonic ideas and social relations that serve capital,[1] that makes it such an important piece on the left. Like strikes and unions themselves, genuine acts of international solidarity can hit at the root of the power of capital's ability to perpetuate competition between workers. Johns notes the importance of international labor solidarity today as a strategy to lessen competition between workers, as a means of resistance to the activities of capital's endless efforts to reproduce uneven development and global division of labor.

However, the activity of workers and unions on the international scale is not always transformative. For instance, the decision of many socialist parties and unions to side with their respective governments during the First World War led to the dissolution of the Second International and put in question the possibilities for international labor solidarity. This was troubling for Lenin, who saw the prevailing nationalist sentiment that arose as an obstacle for revolutionary socialist organizing and strategy. Unfortunately, things like nationalist sentiment, which works to reproduce competition and undermine international solidarity, are strong forces. Other things that counter international solidarity include hegemonic ideas of nation, racism, and patriarchy, as well as economic nationalism, business unionism, corporatism, and anticommunism. There are also the challenges of building relations across great distances, across differences in politics, across economic conditions, and across languages. For Johns, activity that sometimes can even appear to be genuine support can actually serve to protect the privileged locations of work in the global economy (Ryland and Sadler 2008, 475). This is what she terms "accomodationist solidarity"—efforts that can work to reentrench global divisions of labor (Johns 1998, 252).

There are also instances of labor imperialism, which has characterized much of the history of the AFL-CIO internationally (Scipes 2010a; for more, see Bass 2012; Buhle 1999; Carew 1998; Harrod 1972; Hirsch 1974; Radosh 1969; Scipes 2000b, 2010b; Sims 1992). These practices are off Johns's spectrum of solidarity altogether because, unlike accomodationist solidarity, they do not even have the semblance of solidarity. Labor imperialism includes a variety of practices that function to undermine the efforts of other workers' movements internationally; examples include the activities of the AFL-CIO in the coup in Chile in 1973 (Scipes 2000b, 2010a, 40–48).

What is useful about the distinction between transformatory and accomodationist solidarity is that it highlights the contradictions in solidarity as a practice—that some acts, such as labor development-aid projects, might be intended as a form of solidarity

but can actually reproduce and reinforce inequality.

The Canadian Context

The internationalism institutionalized inside the Canadian labor movement starting in the 1940s primarily focused on undermining communist unions and supporting anticommunist movements in the Global South. International policy and practice—centralized as the jurisdiction of the Canadian Labour Congress's (CLC) International Department and a predecessor federation, the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL)—focused on work within the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), joined by activity in the International Labour Organization, and engaged in international anticommunist projects primarily through the ICFTU. This included commitment to Canada's participation in NATO; its role in the Colombo Plan, a commonwealth initiative intended to push back the influence of communist movements in Southeast Asia through aid (see Adeleke 1996); and support for anticommunist unions in places where communist unions were dominant (see Nastovski 2014; Saskatoon Solidarity Committee 1981).

The work of the CLC's International Department for much of the Cold War includes both what Johns would characterize as accomodationist forms of solidarity as well as practices of labor imperialism.[2] This orientation and the practices following from it emerged from a social-democratic anticommunism and the rise and dominance of business unionism, as well as the particularities of settler colonialism in Canada. This meant an economic and political strategy that saw the interests of Canadian workers as tied to upholding the global status quo and helping to beat back communism, as well as Marxist- and socialist-oriented liberation struggles.[3]

However, in the 1960s, solidarity movements reemerged inside the Canadian labor movement and became a significant force through the 1970s and 1980s. The model of grassroots international labor solidarity that union activists developed at this time is significant because it served as a transformative force. In Canada, the reemergence of grassroots international labor solidarity and solidarity movements in the late 1960s happened with the rise of the "New Left."[4]

Many of the activists at the forefront of the building of grassroots labor internationalism in Canada came from the New Left. A number of the activists engaged in this work were students who became politically active against the US invasion of Vietnam, against the coup in Chile, and in feminist organizations. Many of these activists became trade unionists who engaged in solidarity work in their unions or were members or staff of solidarity organizations or NGOs that worked with and supported solidarity efforts within the labor movement. The US invasion of Vietnam and then the coup in Chile sparked the growth of numerous solidarity organizations across Canada. The desire to make solidarity efforts an integral aspect of union work by many of these activists led to the rise of international solidarity work inside the labor movement.

By the 1980s, international solidarity work became particularly visible inside the labor movement, garnering significant attention and support and leading to various forms of workplace and community solidarity actions. The campaigns of the 1970s

and 1980s included work for disarmament, solidarity with Cesar Chavez's movement of migrant agricultural workers, the struggle against South African apartheid, and a wide range of solidarity efforts in Latin America. The solidarity efforts vis-à-vis Latin America began with the Cuban revolution (see Wright 2009), and included significant work against the coup in Chile and later in support of the struggles in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala.

A broad number of organizations engaged in solidarity work. Central American solidarity organizing consisted of a network of groups such as the Latin American Working Group (LAWG) in Toronto and the British Columbia Trade Union Group in Vancouver (source: interviews).[5] Solidarity with Chile was composed of a whole array of small organizations that sprouted up across the country, set up by activists from a range of political backgrounds, from faith groups, and by Chilean refugees themselves post-coup (Canadian Labour Congress Fond). In the case of South African apartheid, the South African Congress of Trade Unions Solidarity Committee (SSC) did the most significant work inside the labor movement (see Freeman 1997; Luckhardt 2006; Nastovski 2014; Saul 2010; Southall 1994).[6]

There were also those organizations that did work in building solidarity inside the labor movement that worked on a number of solidarity efforts simultaneously, such as the Saskatoon Solidarity Committee, Labor World, and the Saskatchewan International Labour Project (SILP). Augmenting this work were efforts outside the labor movement, sometimes by the same organizations, as was the case for LAWG and the Saskatoon Solidarity Committee, whose work did not exclusively focus on mobilizing within the labor movement. Additionally, there was the broader work happening within migrant and refugee organizations, on campuses, in religious organizations, and within broader New Left groups and left political parties.

Examining how activists in the 1970s and 1980s worked to transform labor internationalism in Canada helps us to deliberate prospects and challenges to doing this work today. I argue that the model these activists developed, which is an example of a transformative model of solidarity, is something important to learn from. The strengths of the model lie in the way it draws from models of class struggle unionism, including its emphasis on building worker capacity and working-class power through the adoption of practices that enabled some workers to rethink their political practice. Based on interviews with union activists who organized international labor solidarity in the context of the Canadian labor movement in the 1970s and 1980s, I consider some of the specific lessons we can draw from their organizing. I begin with a discussion of the model they developed and aspects of it, why and how it was transformative, and then move on to an analysis of the strengths and successes of this model, followed by a few of the significant challenges and limitations.

Grassroots International Labor Solidarity

In the late 1970s, activists engaged in building grassroots international solidarity in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, reflected on the problems of doing international labor solidarity work (Saskatoon Solidarity Committee 1981). These efforts translated into the publication of *Partners in Imperialism: The Canadian Labour Congress and*

Social Democracy in the Third World in 1981, which was available at many union conventions throughout the early 1980s. This booklet reflected the movement that was afoot inside the Canadian labor movement in the 1970s and 1980s to develop a different model of labor internationalism.[7]

The booklet, and the Saskatoon Solidarity Committee that authored it, reflected this movement in several ways. One, the booklet focused on exposing and discrediting the anticommunist politics of the CLC—the main Canadian labor federation since 1956—and the ICFTU and how their activities ran counter to the work of numerous liberation struggles and militant worker movements internationally. Two, the committee was active in two key areas: anti-apartheid work (including support for movements in the frontline states of southern Africa such as Mozambique, Tanzania, and Angola) and struggles in Central America, including Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Third, the committee included activists from a variety of political stripes of the broad left, including those coming from the New Left, both party- and nonparty-affiliated Marxists and socialists, social democrats, left nationalists, and those coming out of development organizations, faith groups, and emerging NGOs, and sometimes a combination of a number of these backgrounds.

The Saskatoon Solidarity Committee was a microcosm of what was developing among groups of activists inside the labor movement across Canada at this time. Groups of workers, whether establishing formal organizations or informal networks, had been sprouting up since the late 1960s and early 1970s to develop a different model of labor internationalism. Activists interested in building genuine international trade-union solidarity created organizations and adopted a variety of strategies to develop what many activists termed "worker-to-worker solidarity" inside their unions (interviews). While these groups did not all exclusively focus on changing the nature of internationalism inside trade unions, their efforts within trade unions had the effect of becoming a significant countercurrent vis-à-vis the dominant practices of labor internationalism since World War II. Accordingly, this was an era of hot contestation over the definition and practice of solidarity.

The work of these activists posed a challenge to the existing international practice within the labor movement, engaging in efforts aimed at member education, mobilization, and action inside and outside the workplace. These included establishing solidarity efforts aimed at combating imperialism (for example, the movement against the war in Vietnam), supporting revolutionary movements, liberation struggles, and fledgling socialist governments (for example, in Nicaragua), as well as encouraging struggles combating internal repression and fascism (for example, in Chile and Guatemala). Other struggles were a combination of these goals, such as the work in support of Chile, Cuba, and Nicaragua. These solidarity efforts varied in their specific demands and in their strategies.

The Worker-to-Worker Model

Key to the connection between these various actors engaging in diverse solidarity efforts was the basic model they adopted and that defined their practice: worker-to-worker solidarity. What is this? In very basic terms, the worker-to-worker model

focuses on building relationships across borders between workers themselves. Activists involved in this work emphasized their commitment to mobilizing solidarity among and between rank-and-file workers and community allies, facilitating links with trade unionists internationally, and supporting worker self-activity.[8]

Understanding the worker-to-worker model entails considering what it is not: namely, trade-union diplomacy, aid, charity, or anticommunist practices and policies aimed at undermining, controlling, or attempting to co-opt international labor movements, parties, or liberation movements and struggles. Underlying this model is a different vision of union operation that values mobilizing at the base and that asks members to take action rather than just giving a donation or listening to a speech by the head of another union at labor congresses.

The nature of this practice is what makes the worker-to-worker model a form of grassroots labor internationalism. (For more on grassroots labor internationalism, see Castree 2000; Scipes 2010a; Waterman 1987, 2.) "Grassroots labor internationalism" is used here rather than the more common "new labor internationalism"[9] because I believe that this type of activity has been a long-standing practice on the labor left and a constant, though often muted, countercurrent to the dominant labor internationalism of the institutional labor movement.[10] This alternative grassroots labor internationalism is visible in the early part of the twentieth century in the Canadian context in the efforts in support of the Spanish Republicans, which included the building of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion. This countercurrent reemerged in the 1960s, in the context and reflecting the ideas of the New Left, becoming a powerful force in the Canadian and Quebecois labor movements in the 1970s and 1980s.

This is distinct from what scholars refer to as "old" labor internationalism (Ghigliani 2005; Lucio 2010; Munck 2004; Ryland and Sadler 2008; Waterman 1999). Old labor internationalism typically describes the dominant labor internationalism of much of the twentieth century. This idea denotes a bureaucratic model of internationalism dominated by Cold War alignments, where trade unions operated on the international scale in a way that reflected and extended the interests of their respective states, whether capitalist or communist. This form of internationalism in the West is also associated with the rise of business unionism[11] and institutionalization, confining the power of workers within the institutional structure of unions and their resources in leadership and paid experts, and the terrain of struggle became increasingly limited to the bargaining table and the judicial sphere.

Class-Struggle Unionism

The dominant current shaping the worker-to-worker model drew from militant models of labor organizing often associated with the radical left.[12] The majority of the strengths and successes of the worker-to-worker model arose from the way it emerged from practices and ideas associated with class-struggle unionism (see Ness 2014). Class-struggle unionism encompasses various forms of union organization aimed at challenging capitalism and capitalist social relations. There are numerous strategies that characterize class struggle models of union practice, particularly those practices that emphasize building class consciousness and militancy through organizing spaces

of resistance. This has translated into various configurations, including organizational strategies that led to different forms of political unions. For instance, the principles and strategies of class struggle unionism are reflected in the organizing of the Canadian Workers' Unity League and the One Big Union (for more see Endicott 2011; Leier 1990; Manley 1994; Peterson 1981),[13] and in the activism of many who were part of larger movements and struggles that grew out of anticolonial or antifascist struggles (for more see McNally 2006; Ness 2014; Scipes 1996, 2014b). Regardless of the course these strategies took, common to these strategies and models of unionism is their emphasis on worker power, particularly the importance of organizing the broader working class (including those outside national borders) and the unemployed, as well as a focus on strengthening worker capacities and class consciousness.

A number of activists interviewed explicitly discussed the work they were doing as class-struggle unionism or connected to a wider effort to build and support more militant unions or worker actions (interviews). The strategies and goals following from class-struggle unionism are visible in many aspects of the worker-to-worker model of internationalism. For instance, we see this in the emphasis on rank-and-file self-activity and direct action. This is part of a larger goal of building rank-and-file capacity through facilitating experiences of resistance and building relationships between workers internationally as part of widening the horizons of possibilities of resistance.

I argue that these experiences are what Gramsci calls "counter-hegemonic" practices. Counter-hegemonic practices are those that challenge the hegemony, or dominance and power, of the ruling class, both in terms of control over the material and political mechanisms of the society but also the ideas that accompany and legitimize their control and justify capitalist social relations. This relates to Gramsci's wider view of revolutionary strategy represented in the ideas of "war of position" and "war of manoeuvre." Wars of position are the battles over ideas that sustain capitalism, whereas wars of manoeuvre are those aimed at taking political power and transforming economic and social relations. Counter-hegemonic struggles are part of the war of position. In this case, it is about challenging the "common sense and instinctual notions that had penetrated the workers' movement" (Annunziato 1988, 162). This work constituted counter-hegemonic practice because it was part of a broader push to get workers to think beyond the everyday common sense of business unionism and to rethink political goals and strategies.

These counter-hegemonic practices of the worker-to-worker model, which derive from class struggle models of union action, are what make this model transformative in the sense put forward by both Featherstone and Johns.[14] This orientation shapes the movements and types of struggles organizers choose to build solidarity with and the transformative impact this model of solidarity has locally via the strategies they employ. Critical to the transformative potential of this model of solidarity is the way it operates to support the goals and strategies of different international struggles that challenge the status quo of the global division of labor (and the particulars of the global socioeconomic status quo based on the legacies of colonialism and both past

and existing imperialism).

To assess the possible transformative impact of this work on the diverse movements organizers were working in solidarity with would require a much larger study. Here, I take up Featherstone's contention that solidarity efforts have the potential to be transformative of the local social and political terrain; focus here is on the transformative impact of this model for Canadian workers. In particular, what was important about this was the way the organizing was counter-hegemonic through the experiences they facilitated and the goals of their work. While classic educationals were definitely a core of the work, this work was also a site of counter-hegemony through its emphasis on worker-led solidarity actions and control, building relationships between workers internationally and through challenging imperialism and labor imperialism.

The next section considers some of these transformative elements of the worker-to-worker model in practice. I begin with two aspects: the rank-and-file focus of the worker-to-worker model and how the experiences they facilitated were counter-hegemonic practices. The first is the emphasis on worker power and direct action and the second the building of relationships between workers. Next, the anti-imperialist analysis and opposition to the labor imperialism and accomodationist solidarity of the CLC is considered. Then I look at how the demands for worker power and control translated into the development of worker-led spaces for international solidarity within different locals, councils, and provincial and national unions. Finally, I end with a synopsis before moving on to the limitations of this work.

Counter-Hegemonic Practices

The focus on building solidarity between workers distinguishes this model of solidarity from others dominant at the time—such as those that focused on organizing solidarity among students or women or within the LGBT community. Nelson Lichtenstein notes in his book *State of the Union* that the New Left in the United States turned their sights to the working class with a focus on rank-and-file issues and organizing (2002, 170). This aim was also a feature of currents of the Canadian New Left and became a strategy of many of these new organizations and parties, ranging from Marxist autonomists to left nationalist groups like the Waffle faction within the New Democratic Party (interviews; Bullen 1983; High 2001, 202–203; Sangster 2006, 47).[15]

This meant that organizers specifically framed solidarity as a component of class struggle more generally. This is visible in the analyses developed and articulated through educationals, the emphasis of organizers on worker power and self-activity,[16] and the use of workers' strategic location in workplaces to act in solidarity with struggles around the world. For example, the work of the SSC targeted Canadian capital and the state and focused on how international capital operated in South Africa to support the apartheid system and profit from it through the racist division of labor it upheld.

Worker Power and Direct Action

The emphasis on worker self-activity highlights the way solidarity efforts can also be sites of strengthening the local by building capacities for resistance. Part of this was the way organizers mobilized workers to use their own strategic place and power as rank-and-file workers to engage in solidarity efforts within the workplace. In the case of the struggle against South African apartheid, the experiences facilitated by organizers emphasized the power of workers to engage in solidarity through direct action. This included various forms of direct action taken by workers in grocery stores across the country, as well as workplace disruptions (interviews), such as disrupting communications and transportation between Canada and South Africa that took place between March 8 and 15, 1986, involving postal, longshore, and telecommunication workers (Nastovski 2014; *Pacific Tribune* 1986; South African Congress of Trade Unions Solidarity Committee 1986). This week of action involved workers risking their own livelihoods and making themselves subject to possible disciplinary action for their stand in solidarity against apartheid. This is an example of a coordinated direct action that mobilized the power of workers within the workplace, emphasizing their collective power to engage in economic and political disruptions through their strategic place in the workplace. The week of action is an example of solidarity, mobilized at the grassroots, winning institutional support and becoming a site for strengthening both the struggle against apartheid and the capacity to resist locally.

In this way, solidarity as self-activity is a site of what Marxists would call a school of war. In *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, Engels discusses the vitality of experiences of resistance for political transformation and revolution. In particular, he discusses this in relation to acts of resistance such as strikes, arguing that the processes of participating in these acts of resistance are transformative because they serve as sites of learning. Strikes, he argues, "are the military school of the working men in which they prepare themselves for the great struggle which cannot be avoided . . . and as schools of war the unions are unexcelled" (Engels 1845).

Featherstone, following from this idea, contends that this practice of resistance can be part of a process of politicization (2012, 7) by emphasizing practice about worker self-activity. During the 1970s and 1980s, activists challenged hegemonic ideas about union practice and the potential for resistance and change.

Another example of how this work promoted the self-activity of workers is the way delegations to Nicaragua were organized. Members who went on delegations took on organizing the next delegation. This was a model to share the work, adding a level of sustainability. Underlining this practice was also an assumption that members would learn through these experiences and develop the confidence and skills to act more generally. Solidarity as action here was a transformative process because it reframed solidarity in a way that drew links between struggles by calling on workers to rethink the nature of their struggle and think in new ways how they could use their power to act.

Building Relationships

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, organizers facilitated experiences that were transformative and counter-hegemonic through efforts to build relationships between

rank-and-file workers. The Central American work emphasized solidarity through direct worker-to-worker relationships and conversations. Whether that was through the series of delegations to Nicaragua throughout the 1980s or through the various shop-floor meetings with rank and filers and leaders of the new Sandinista unions to discuss strategies, workers talked about challenges of building unions within a revolutionary context.[17] These experiences were sites of questioning and rethinking of the common sense of business union practices (interviews). Activists did this by organizing delegations and conferences and by hosting and touring trade unionists across the country with the explicit intention of widening the view of members about the possibilities of worker power, as well as possible tactics, strategies, and goals beyond the collective agreement.[18] Committees and organizations that were doing solidarity work in the labor movement were also involved, bringing a tremendous number of international trade unionists not just to councils and locals but also, in the case of the organizing in Canadian Prairie provinces, to workplaces themselves to facilitate conversations and relations that reached beyond even the layer of rank-and-file workers involved in the union.

The relationships developed were often an effective means of challenging hegemonic notions of union practice and strategies through the sharing of experiences of struggle. These experiences were also important to overcome one of the big challenges when trying to build international labor solidarity—that is, the abstraction of international solidarity and workers internationally from the terrain of union struggle. This is a product of many things (which I cannot fully elaborate on here), including the role of real physical distance and hegemonic ideas such as white supremacy that can function in the many parts of the Global North to mediate views of and relations with workers in the Global South. This is visible in xenophobic responses to migrant workers as well as ideas of development that posit union action in the North as more advanced, or in narratives that draw on racist explanations of uneven global divisions of labour and wealth. These relationships contested notions of international solidarity as a form of charity (which arises from white-supremacist or business-union frameworks). Charity models reinforce white supremacy because they operate under a logic that omits history and the way resources accumulated in the Global North. It also denies mutuality by framing workers internationally as victims and power as a material resource held in the Global North, rather than emphasizing the power workers possess to act together.

Anti-Imperialism and Class Struggle

Following from and supporting the efforts to facilitate new politics and conceptions of struggle through experiences of worker direct action and building relationships is the way organizers confronted the history and reality of imperialism during the 1970s and 1980s. Organizers explicitly drew connections between the struggle of workers and anti-imperialism, specifically that anti-imperialism is integral for the possibility of worker justice or emancipation.

In many of the campaigns, the connection between anti-imperialism and possibilities of worker justice was central—for instance, US imperialism in Central

America and imperialism and colonialism in southern Africa. The connections organizers made resonated so strongly in the Canadian context of the time due to the climate of left nationalism dominant in the era. While many of the activists engaged in developing the worker-to-worker model would not themselves identify as left nationalists, the general climate of left nationalism and its analysis of and emphasis on imperialism was part of the context in which the organizing happened. A close alignment developed between left nationalism and anti-imperialism in this period. (This alignment, operating to contest imperialism and labor imperialism, is quite different from the United States context, in which nationalism fuelled labor imperialism [Scipes 2010b].) In Canada, it was this left nationalism that opposed the "continentalist"[19] position inside labor in this period, which saw the prosperity of workers as tied to the success of US capital locally and abroad, translating into support for US imperialism. The dominant Canadian left nationalism of this time identified fighting American imperialism as central to the emancipation of workers in Canada and internationally.[20]

Class and Nation

In Canada, the spike in class conflict in the mid-1960s happened at the height of US ownership in the Canadian economy (Palmer 2009, 222). In the 1970s, nationalist sentiment fuelled resistance to the shutdown of factories and was part of often-successful strategies to win public support that translated into legislative changes offering some protections for workers facing plant shutdowns (High 2001). An important part of the rise in popularity of economic nationalism inside the labor movement in this period had to do with its connection to militancy and its success as part of the strategy of different workplace struggles in this period. Steven High argues that economic nationalism lent strength to efforts to resist plant shutdowns in the 1970s and 1980s (High 2001). "The convergence of economic nationalism and the anti-shutdown movement resulted in a fundamentally different understanding of the issue in Canada; every time a mill or factory closed, it signalled the negative effects of American domination over Canada" (High 2001, 212). High notes that the role of economic nationalism—as part of the analysis and strategy around plant shutdowns and other struggles—worked to garner public support and led to legislative changes that strengthened the legal power of Canadian workers with respect to shutdowns (2001, 209).[21]

Dependency Theory and Anti-Imperialism

Anti-imperialism became a key part of the left nationalist analysis, particularly via dependency theory and its emphasis on imperialism as a phenomenon that shapes conditions of work, the nature of class struggle, and social and economic life in Canada more generally. The theory of Canada as a dependency, Paul Kellogg notes, developed in the 1960s and 1970s and grew out a combination of Harold Innis's staples theory and Andre Gunder Frank's theory of dependency/underdevelopment (Kellogg 1989, 341).[22] Gunder Frank's theory of dependency emerged from what he saw as the conditions of the economies of the Global South. Canadian left nationalists

saw Canada as similarly subject to US imperialism and, like the Global South, Canada was "lacking a strong industrial bourgeoisie of its own" (Gordon 2010, 15).

Todd Gordon notes that Canadian left nationalists concluded that because of this, Canada was dependent economically on the United States (2010, 15), and so national independence via challenging US imperialism was critical to the possibility of a socialist Canada (Gordon 2010; Kellogg 1989; McNally 1991; Scott 1978b).[23] The struggle for national sovereignty included efforts to halt American investment, to push for the nationalization of numerous industries, and for the Canadianization of unions. This work also included efforts to bolster labor struggles and strengthen demands for the expansion of the social welfare state.

The adoption of this theory to describe an industrialized white settler colony in the Global North built the idea of affinity between anti-imperialist struggles in the Global South and that of socialists in Canada. Hence, the analysis of imperialism that developed in this period created a strong basis for a sense of mutuality between workers in Canada and those workers fighting imperialism in the Global South because of the framing of a common fight against US imperialism. Chandra Mohanty, like Samora Machel, argues that solidarity is forged in terms of mutuality and recognition of common interests and is therefore a process of coming together to fight (Mohanty 2003, 7).[24] The connection drawn lent force to the idea of the necessity of supporting other struggles against US imperialism.

Exemplifying this connection is the series written by Jack Scott about US labor imperialism. The first book, *Yankee Unions, Go Home!* (1978a) considers US labor imperialism in the Global South.[25] The second book, *Canadian Workers, American Unions* (1978b), following from the first, specifically focuses on delegitimizing the role of US unions in Canada. For many left nationalists, the fight against US imperialism and US labor imperialism was a local struggle but also entailed supporting similar struggles internationally.

Challenging Labor Imperialism and Accomodationist Solidarity

This anti-imperialist orientation also entailed challenging US labor imperialism and the labor imperialism and accomodationist solidarity that marked the work of the CLC. The worker-to-worker model eclipsed and served for a time to delegitimize the authority of the CLC International Department and the vision of internationalism represented in its work. This work of building a new model of labor internationalism was itself an indirect challenge to the work of the CLC in that it offered an alternative to their model, but it also meant directly taking on the policies, practices, and formal ties that CLC's International Department promoted (see Nastovski 2014).

Institutionally, from the time the CCL[26] set up its International Department in 1953 (Canadian Labour Congress Fond), Canadian unions made international affairs the purview of this department.[27] Resistance to this limited jurisdiction and the ideological orientation of the department and committee existed prior to the 1970s. There was activity happening at different levels of union life; however, the Cold War climate and repression curbed dissension in this period.[28] The CCL and then CLC's International Department were established during the intense early Cold War period that was

redefining the labor movement through the repression of and ideological war against the left as well as a new legislative regime that was transforming the way unions operated. The orientation of these departments and their committees was fervently anticommunist, focusing primarily on supporting aid initiatives serving to weaken communist unions and movements internationally. Part of this was also about actively supporting forces across a broad ideological spectrum that challenged revolutionary movements.

For Michael Murphy and those in the Saskatoon Solidarity Committee, the CLC's actions internationally and the relationship they developed with the state to administer aid were primarily about advancing social democracy internationally (Murphy 1985, 6; Saskatoon Solidarity Committee 1981). While some unions were simultaneously also implicated in US-style labor imperialism through the practices of their respective US international headquarters, the CLC's activities were often closer to those of anticommunist federations in Europe based on their commitment to the decisions and targets of the ICFTU and a social-democratic orientation (Canadian Labour Congress Fond).

This meant that unlike in the AFL-CIO, there were areas where activists who opposed the ideological orientation of the CLC could sometimes find common ground —for example, on disarmament and the coup in Chile. However, this was limited and meant that activists involved in Central American and southern African solidarity in this period had to confront the CLC International Affairs Department at conventions but also at union schools, labor council meetings, and federations of labor.[29] Some of what activists had to confront included red-baiting, explicit efforts to shut down tours and delegations or intervene in them, and efforts meant to undermine or redirect fund-raising work of activists (interviews; CCL Convention Proceedings 1941–1955; CLC Convention Proceedings, 1956–1988).

Activists from the 1980s shared many such stories in their interviews. A common tactic used by CLC leadership and staff was to block resolutions by arguing that they ran contrary to CLC policy. This was because many of the resolutions put forward by activists were to support unions that neither were in nor had relations with the ICFTU, such as in the case of South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), the Workers' Central Union of Cuba, and the new Sandinista unions. This was also done by some CLC representatives at labor councils, schools, or federation events, who would try and shut down discussions or activities by arguing that international affairs were the exclusive domain of the International Department (interviews). The jurisdictional argument and those flowing from it, such as the importance of formal links and affiliations, operated to provide further impetus to demand more local control over international issues.

The responses by organizers to these institutional barriers included direct defiance of the CLC International Department or ignoring them completely, developing grassroots support through mobilizing and educating members and local and council leadership, working to expose problematic aspects of their policies and practices, pushing for more local control, and offering an alternative model to their work. Marv Gandall stated the obvious in 1985: "For the foreseeable future, the most concrete acts

of solidarity will continue to take place below the level of the Congress, and often in defiance of it" (1985, 17).

Direct battles between solidarity activists and CLC staff and leaders took place at conventions but also in council meetings and CLC educationals. It was evident in interviews that particularly in western Canada there was a broad lack of interest and respect for the CLC generally, which translated into mostly ignoring their positions and charting their own policies (interviews). Examples of this include the history of the Vancouver and District Labour Council, which has a proud history of defying CLC policy. There was also the Grain Services Union (GSU) that, despite pressures from various union bodies, engaged in solidarity with Mozambiquan workers affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions (interviews). Another example raised was the work of Dave Werlin, who served as president of the Alberta Federation of Labour and did a lot of work to support worker-to-worker solidarity (interviews). One of my interviewees recounted that during the British miners' strike in 1984–1985, Werlin supported bringing striking miners to Canada and touring them across the country despite the objections of the CLC, which, taking the lead from its sister federation the British Trades Union Congress, did not engage in or support solidarity efforts (interviews).

Grassroots organizing was an important way that activists dealt with these institutional challenges. They sought to build power and support by going to members directly, and this meant that they had incredible reach. Organizers found space to speak or raise issues on the agendas of meetings of locals and councils, sometimes touring international union guests to meetings of local unions or to workplaces themselves. The various solidarity campaigns operated differently in how they got this done, but most involved the work of activists across the country organized as loose or more formal networks and organizations. This strategy required and was able to draw upon the significant capacity they had developed due to the commitment of community-based solidarity activists spread out throughout numerous towns and cities and the knowledge and skills of migrants and refugees who became union activists.

So while the CLC International Department often passed its policy papers at conventions, the CLC had little power to stop the core of the work, which happened at the local and workplace level. The scope and level of engagement of union members in these solidarity movements meant, for instance, that while the CLC supported the anti-Sandinista unions, it was unable politically to shut down the solidarity work extended to the new Sandinista unions or union support for it. The political backing of certain unions, like the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and the United Auto Workers Canadian Section—which became the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) in 1984—particularly in the case of anti-apartheid work, provided considerable strength to efforts to oppose the internationalism of the CLC.

Worker Control

The last strength of this organizing that should be noted is how activists pushed for and won measures for democratic control over international solidarity work and decision making in a number of unions. The organizing of activists on the worker-to-

worker model had substantial reach, significantly raising the level of knowledge and engagement in international solidarity by rank-and-file workers in a number of unions. This also led to both political and structural changes in the practice of labor internationalism in Canadian unions, including the development of international committees. The institutional spaces workers won due to rank-and-file-directed, rank-and-file-led international solidarity are part of the success of the struggle against the policies and practices of the CLC International Department. This was also a part of a larger process going on at this time, resulting in the building of women's committees, LGBT committees, antiracism caucuses, and workers of color caucuses.

Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, international committees with funding were set up in federations, councils, locals, national and provincial unions, and Canadian sections of international unions. While labor councils were sites of contestation and worker-led international solidarity prior to this period, the development of funded committees is something that arose in this period and was largely a product of the efforts of activists engaged in worker-to-worker solidarity. These new bodies ranged from very grassroots committees that were rank-and-file-based and interested in building direct worker-to-worker links through twinning projects, tours, and delegations, to boards that managed projects funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which offered limited member involvement.

Some of these committees were elected and others appointed by the leadership, and they varied in their structures and mandates. For instance, some focused on development-aid projects like SILP, which was set up to be a rank-and-file-run body to decide on and work to carry out development projects with partner unions with matching CIDA funds. These funds—run by boards, staff, and leadership or committees—began in the dominant private sector unions and in many ways mirrored the work of the CLC International Department in that solidarity as a practice was about the negotiation and management of development-aid projects. However, many of these, such as SILP, the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees Union, the GSU, and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, engaged in projects that ran counter to the anticommunist framework and were designed to be a part of building relationships with partner unions internationally in line with the worker-to-worker model (interviews). Projects like SILP were a hybrid between committees and funds because they did a lot of education work and managed CIDA-funded projects. Others focused on doing educational work inside their union or engaging in mobilization of workers to support various solidarity actions.

The type of institutional mechanism for doing international labor solidarity that developed in particular unions had a lot to do with the individual activists and the campaigns they were involved in. For instance, the nature of the struggles in Central America meant that material resources were an important aspect of solidarity work. This was less prominent, for instance, in the case of the work against apartheid, because while funds were raised for SACTU, the priority was building the international campaign through boycott, divestment, and sanctions against apartheid South Africa (for an account of the latter, see Nastovski 2014).

The level of success organizers had in pushing back CLC control, challenging their policies and practices, and setting up spaces for worker control and decision making over this work was the result of the sense of mutuality that organizers were able to build but also with extensive leadership support at different levels. The openness of various leaders at this time to developing new practices of labor internationalism arose in part from institutional changes in this period.[30] This had to do with the rise of the public sector and the Canadianization of unions, which meant Canadian sections of international unions leaving their international union and forming an independent Canadian union among the Canadian membership.

New and Renewed Unions

This movement for changing unions gave rise to new unions and the renewal of unions on explicit class-struggle models. In established international unions, this meant fighting against the conservative force of US-based leadership and staff. One consequence of this struggle was the formation of several new unions. Many new unions were breakaways from internationals, such as the Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers (CAIMAW); CAIMAW then affiliated with a new militant left nationalist labor center, the Confederation of Canadian Unions, which emerged as an alternative to the CLC. Others broke away from their internationals but remained affiliated to the CLC, such as the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), formed in 1984 after splitting from the United Auto Workers (UAW).

Other unions were brand new, set up to organize workers traditionally neglected or ignored by much of the existing labor movement. One such union was the Service, Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada, a socialist-feminist workers union set up in western Canada with the express purpose of organizing in sectors that were female dominated and unorganized (Smith 2009). Other new unions that emerged in this period were largely in the public sector and, while not established with an explicit class-struggle model of unionism, were quite militant in this period due to the nature of their struggle. Due to the efforts of the state to limit their ability to bargain and strike but also in some cases to organize at all, these unions took on actions to win their demands that included illegal strikes.

Other unions reinvented themselves in this period. One was the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux,[31] which had historically been a conservative Catholic union that secularized and radicalized in the 1960s (see Güntzel 1993; Mills 2010). Another example of this was CUPW (see Langford 1996; Parrot 2005; Tufts 1998).

Openings

Canadian left nationalism made it easier to find spaces to talk to union members, to find political and material support, and to make institutional changes to sustain the work. The rise of Canadian unions also contributed to the increased space that opened up in this period to discuss and reinvent international solidarity. The new and renewed unions that came up at this time created openings to reinvent or resuscitate international labor solidarity. This climate meant new opportunities ideologically and structurally, creating openings for rethinking policy and taking positions independent

from the CLC or US headquarters. This is because new and renewed unions were in the midst of developing their own politics, priorities, and practices, and the breakaway unions were reevaluating their past policies and practices designed predominantly in the United States.

Pressure was coming from below via the work of solidarity organizers, but the climate of rethinking and challenging past practices and existing structures meant that there were various unions with leaders open to these efforts to take labor internationalism in a new direction. There are many examples of leaders openly defying CLC policy and actively supporting the efforts of organizers engaged in building member-run grassroots international labor solidarity.[32] For instance, CUPW and CAW provided political and material support in the work against apartheid. This happened despite the CLC's lack of support for the ANC and outright opposition to SACTU and the SACTU Solidarity Committee. This is significant because the Canadian section of the UAW was historically a strong force inside the CLC. Other examples raised by activists were the openness of the new public-sector unions and many of their leaders to building a new labor internationalism that was decentralized and member-driven and to challenging the Cold War politics of the CLC's International Department (interviews).

Synopsis

The worker-to-worker model operated as a significant counter-hegemonic force vis-à-vis the dominant context of institutionalized labor internationalism inside Canadian unions. The success of these activists—in encouraging worker self-activity and direct action, creating space for workers to rethink the efficacy of normalized union organization and strategy, demanding worker control, and integrating an anti-imperialist practice and analysis that made links between imperialism and local union struggle—constituted a significant counter-hegemonic force in this period.

The principal strengths of the worker-to-worker model provide an important lens for evaluating practices of internationalism today. To what extent do these practices challenge hegemonic ideas that limit worker power and resistance? Do they address the processes that reentrench global divisions of labor such as imperialism and neocolonialism? And to what extent do they support the self-activity of workers and their control over international solidarity? I will now turn to some of the limitations of this particular model and its specific manifestation in the Canadian context in the 1970s and 1980s.

Limitations and Challenges

There are almost countless challenges to doing effective transformative international labor solidarity work. A few of these are 1) the incredible capacity needed to carry out grassroots work among workers spread across thousands of workplaces and hundreds of thousands of kilometers; 2) the number of competing struggles coupled with limited energy and resources; 3) hegemonic ideas of race, white supremacy, patriarchy, and nationalism; and 4) the opportunism, careerism, and co-optation of union leaders, members, and staff. Underlying this is the broader abstraction of international

solidarity through hegemonic ideas but also real physical distance and differences in politics, socioeconomic climates/contexts, and, in places like Canada, the embedded normalization of business union practice that frames international solidarity as at best marginal within the work of the union.

Many of these challenges were at work in the development of the worker-to-worker model in Canada in this period. Here I will consider three interrelated limitations of the organizing that arise from the strengths and successes of the model. The first are the drawbacks and contradictions in the economic nationalist climate, particularly the way it was a site for a strong sense of mutuality but simultaneously operated in a tension with international solidarity by privileging and maintaining the national terrain. The second is the economistic reading of imperialism that was dominant in this period, and the way that this meant a failure to tie imperialism to racism and white supremacy. Lastly, I look at the problem of sustainability of this solidarity work. A major strength was the way that they were able to draw from a huge number of activists. The labor-intensive nature of this work, though, was also part of its limitation because the numbers of people needed to sustain this level of organizing were not always available.

Limitations of Left Nationalism

For V. I. Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, and more recent scholars of labor internationalism like Victor Silverman, nationalism is a principal part of the failures of labor internationalism historically. Both Luxemburg and Lenin lamented the rise of nationalism among socialist parties during the First World War, seeing this as a tragic setback for working-class power. “Each universal workers organization, from Marx’s own international workingmen’s association to the world federation, failed in the end to overcome the penetration of national interests in class concerns” (Silverman 2000, 13).

While left nationalism served for a time to support a basis for mutuality, the adoption of a nationalist strategy for labor is at odds with internationalism in the true Marxist sense of uniting workers transnationally, as it reinforces the borders used to support inequalities between workers, reinforcing and sustaining the global division of labor.

The left nationalisms of this period were economic nationalisms. Different varieties of economic nationalism have been mainstay forces within many labor movements. In Canada, economic nationalisms in the organized labor movement long predate the era examined here (TLC Convention Proceedings 1900–1955; CCL Convention Proceedings 1941–1955). It has been prominent among unionists from an array of political viewpoints and connected to various strategies for labor. The diverse strategies that follow from these economic nationalisms include direct support for the interests of one’s employer, blocking immigration, promoting corporatism, working to improve the social welfare state, fighting US imperialism, and developing a national industrial plan with the aim of nationalization. There are many more strategies and various rationales connected to the different economic nationalist forces inside the organized Canadian labor movement throughout its existence.

The dominance of economic nationalism as a strategy in many unions speaks to the contradiction of trade unions themselves—namely that their existence is tied to capitalism (Anderson 1967; Hyman 1975). Workers and trade unions find themselves in a situation where their power is not equal to that of capital. This leaves workers trapped in ultimately absurd or contradictory options to win more just conditions. Economic nationalism constitutes one of these contradictory options. It means, for instance, the CAW fighting for government subsidies for General Motors, or lobbying for their own jobs by pushing for their employers to win government contracts, as seen in the Made in Canada campaign. Joan Sangster argues that the "nationalist response to capital mobility . . . consequently ended up supporting ideas that Canadian capital was somehow kinder and gentler" (2006, 52).

Other scholars have addressed this problem of economic nationalism as well. Dana Frank, assessing the history of economic nationalist strategies of labor in the United States, argues that neither "free trade" nor protectionism can be strategies for the emancipation of workers (Frank 2000).[33] David McNally similarly argues that economic nationalism traps us in a paradigm that has no out for workers, adopting a strategy that is rooted in competition and is ultimately ineffective in fighting the internationalized capitalist economy (McNally 1991, 233).

Some of the relevant critiques of nationalism on the left, which I argue also apply to left nationalism as a basis for building international labor solidarity, include: 1) the way it undermines / exists in a tension with internationalism as a goal by ultimately privileging the national terrain, as was the case with socialist parties during the First World War (Foreman 2010; Luxemburg 1976); 2) the way that nationalism shapes an alliance with national capital, the state, and their interests (Frank 2004; Gordon 2010, 16; Kellogg 1989; McNally 1991); 3) the way it reinforces the border, thereby functioning to sustain the global division of labor shaped by practices and legacies of colonialism and imperialism; and 4) the way it obscures class antagonisms, thereby serving as a barrier to revolutionary and transformative strategies for labor.[34]

Limitations of Counter-Hegemony

While Canadian unions in this period often supported more democratic practices around international solidarity and more room for progressive policies, this is not because there is something essentially more progressive about Canadian unions or Canadian workers. For instance, the CLC's anticommunist politics and practices were not imposed by American unions: they arose from the interests and efforts of Canadian trade unionists, many of whom were in international unions but built a specifically Canadian anticommunist internationalism (Canadian Labor Congress Fond, Saskatoon Solidarity Committee 1981). This stuff was locally derived and had a specific Canadian orientation reflected in its social-democratic orientation. This is not to say US unions had no influence, but the CLC's program was autonomous of the AFL-CIO and often much more closely aligned with the ICFTU.

The idea that militancy of Canadian unions could be won through the eradication of American union presence prevented a deeper look at the ideological and structural issues that also existed in Canadian unions. In this period, winning autonomy from US

unions was often an effective way to make progressive changes inside particular unions and support greater militancy.[35] However, gaining autonomy from US unions was not enough in and of itself to transform Canadian unions into more militant or progressive institutions, or to institutionalize a radically different kind of program for international labor solidarity. The movements for autonomy created openings for the reinvention of labor internationalism in this time of left upsurge. However, the structural changes that were won were not sustainable without continuous counter-hegemonic work to maintain a radically different program. This is because structural and organizational changes do not themselves change the underlying assumptions, hegemonic practices, and ideas such as white supremacy and the developmentalist logic embedded within the dominant liberal narratives of global history. In this way, Canadian trade unionists who were interested in changing the international practice of their unions faced many of the same problems as American trade unionists.

While activists confronted important aspects of global inequality such as the critical institutions of neo-imperialism, they did not always consider the underlying social dimensions born of the historical development of global divisions of labor. This is partly the result of dominant economistic analyses of imperialism dominant in this period. An example of this is the lack of consideration for hegemonic ideas and practices of racism and white supremacy in the analysis, design, or carrying out of international solidarity efforts. Only a few people interviewed thought through the role of race and racism in organizing international labor solidarity. This significant omission is reflective of the lack of prominence of the question and analysis of race among many of the mainstream left groups in Canada in this period. This omission of the question and priority of the question of racism is especially interesting given the context of a racist labor market and settler-colonial context (Bannerji 1993, 1995, 2005; Calliste 1989, 1994, 1995; Creese 1987, 1988, 2007; Creese and Wiebe 2012; Das Gupta 1996, 1999; Das Gupta, James, and Maaka 2007; Dei 1996; Frager 1989, 1992; Goutor 2007a, 2007b, 2011; Satzewich 1990, 1998, 2000, 2011; Sharma 1997, 2001, 2002, 2006; Thobani 2000, 2007) and points to deeper issues within the Canadian labor movement's consideration of the link between exploitation and oppression.

There were of course exceptions to this omission of the social dimensions of the global division of labor and its concomitant hegemonic ideas. For instance, the anti-apartheid work explicitly considered the relations between race and class. The effects of differences between workers internationally on the social as well as the material sphere are important for a critical examination of how solidarity efforts could function to reentrench uneven relations of power or leave intact underlying ideas that support it. Alicia Schmidt Camacho argues, "The crisis of international trade unionism is a direct result of the hyper-differentiation of workers along lines of race, gender, nationality, and immigration status. Yet it is also a crisis of the developmentalist logic of the US labor movement's compact with the welfare state, and its own participation in the segmentation of the workforce, both within the US and in the Third World" (1999, 92).

Schmidt Camacho raises a problem here that is relevant for assessing the

implications of this model of worker-to-worker solidarity. One of the consequences of not considering the social and ideological aspects of uneven relations is that critical underlying aspects can remain intact, such as the function of the border or the way paternalistic relations can be reinforced through solidarity consisting primarily of government development-aid projects.

Limitations of Sustainability and Institutionalization

One of the great challenges of this model of international labor solidarity was the labor power it required. Worker-to-worker solidarity was both labor-intensive and expensive; the question of sustainability was therefore a significant underlying problem. The issues included a limited capacity of the core activists to sustain the work long-term alongside of their paid jobs, as well as difficulties bringing in new activists who could devote similar amounts of time and energy to this organizing. The pool of available activists and their ability to provide a focused commitment to this work was constantly in flux. This varied depending on what other struggles were happening locally and the availability of paid work that was suited to this organizing. This meant either taking jobs that were not terribly grueling and demanding time-wise or, as in the case of those activists who were employed in CIDA-funded "earners centers," set up to do community education about international development, work where union international solidarity organizing could be integrated into their paid work (interviews).

The difficulty of capacity coupled with an increasingly difficult climate for unions as the 1980s unfolded (see Panitch and Swartz 1984; Palmer and Goldfield 2007) meant a decreasing reach. The capacity to sustain this intense level of activity was a great strength through the 1970s and 1980s but became a limitation as the pool of activists receded. Activists tackled the challenge of the amount of effort and energy needed to sustain this work with different strategies. For some, the setting up of committees and funds was the way to sustain the work; in other places, union leadership hired staff to manage international affairs, while in others the organizing slowed and disappeared at different points throughout the 1990s.

Some activists also saw incorporating this work within the structures of the union as a logical move because it encouraged more direct worker control over international solidarity. However, institutionalization also had the effect of changing the nature of the solidarity work.

For instance, development-aid projects became the core of the international solidarity work of a number of unions. Development-aid projects, some argued, were a way to do solidarity without needing huge numbers or time. They could draw on the institutional strength of the union, for instance, by hiring a staff person to manage projects; CIDA funding therefore became a pragmatic option for sustaining this work. Many factors contributed to this becoming a dominant institutional means to sustain solidarity work. Part of this had to do with where some of the activists were coming from—that is, NGOs. Many of these activists were critical of development aid being provided by the state (see Barry-Shaw, Engler, and Oja-Jay 2012; Carty and Smith 1981), but especially for those whose salaries were paid through CIDA, they

rationalized this CIDA money as being used to support solidarity work.

In an era of substantial left upsurge in Canadian unions, it is curious how the question of state funding did not become a significant debate or dilemma for those working to redefine international labor solidarity. As a practice, CIDA funding and development-aid projects became a practical means to create and fund new union spaces and means to more democratically carry out solidarity efforts. Activists were not blind to the problems of state funding and Canadian state interests internationally. Some of the problems include 1) how accepting this funding can function to legitimize the actions and interests of CIDA itself and the Canadian state; 2) how it can maintain the unevenness of power between "partner" unions and can reinforce hegemonic white supremacy; 3) how CIDA guidelines shape the design of solidarity projects, including where these projects can take place; and 4) how projects fall short or run counter to efforts at tackling larger processes that shape exploitation and oppression. Despite reservations by some, the promise of funding and its potential to provide an institutional means of sustainability outweighed concerns.

On the level of practice, the rise of outside funds, boards, and committees that did union development-aid projects was also limited in that they minimized the role of members and member action. This is part of the contradiction inherent in the problem of sustainability. On the one hand, funding development projects meant a higher chance of sustainability because it did not require a constant renewal of an activist base to sustain it. But it is precisely this minimized need that undermines it as a means of sustaining a different model of labor internationalism, particularly a model based on members engaging in solidarity action on a wide scale and building worker-to-worker relationships. The focus on the negotiation and management of development projects makes the role of rank-and-file workers in the international practices of their unions again superfluous. This in turn undermines the new model and its transformative potential.

Some of the limitations noted here, such as the role of left nationalism, are particular to the Canadian context. However, different variants of nationalism and white supremacy have applicability to other labor movements in the Global North. This is also true for the structural limitations of the aid paradigm. The dominance of development aid applies to many of the big affiliates of the former ICFTU. Besides these limitations, there are many more to be considered in attempting to revive such a model today. These include deindustrialization and the decline of union power, decreased levels of unionization, and a more limited activist base inside the union and within the broader community of unorganized and unemployed workers.

Conclusion

This in-depth examination of efforts to build international labor solidarity in Canada, based on interviews with a wide number of activists across the country, has shown that the movement for a new model of labor internationalism in the Canadian labor movement in the 1970s and 1980s was a significant departure from the institutionalized Cold War internationalism of the CLC. This movement provides an example of a transformative model of rank-and-file-driven, rank-and-file-focused

international labor solidarity. The efforts of so many different organizations and loose networks of union activists came together in this period to create new practices of labor internationalism rooted in class-struggle unionism. Activists developed practices centered on workers and worker power to act in solidarity and were victorious in efforts to win more local control and democratic oversight regarding the direction of international solidarity work. They also strengthened direct links between unions in Canada and unions internationally, as well as union relationships with community solidarity organizations. Altogether, this led to substantial institutional changes and functioned to push back the Cold War diplomacy and anticommunist development projects that had been dominant in the Canadian labor movement since international departments were first set up.

This movement dissipated in the late 1990s, but it contributed to some of the approaches and organizing practices that developed within the labor movement around the North American Free Trade Agreement and then the antiglobalization protests. The decline of this movement had numerous historical factors, including decreased capacity and incorporation into the structures of various unions, the rise of neoliberalism, and decreased union power. Some of these factors continue to shape the conditions in which we organize today, including neoliberalism, uneven capitalist development, and ideological barriers such as white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, and nationalism. There are also a number of structural challenges that organizers faced in doing this work, and these challenges continue to function as barriers for doing international labor solidarity inside unions today. Some of these structurally embedded barriers are linked to the limits of trade unions themselves and need further consideration. Examining practices of grassroots labor internationalism in more depth is critical to thinking through possibilities for transformative forms of worker solidarity and coordination across borders today.

CHAPTER 3

Building Bridges Between the Labor Movement and Transnational Migration Research: What Potential for International Solidarity?

Jenny Jungehülsing

> *As the process acquires momentum, grassroots transnationalism has the potential of subverting one of the fundamental premises of capitalist globalization, namely that labor stays local, whereas capital ranges global.*
>
> Portes et al. 1999

In times of economic globalization, international solidarity becomes ever more necessary for labor. With growing global economic interdependence and capital operating increasingly transnationally, the possibilities to defend workers' rights at a national scale are becoming increasingly limited. Labor movements, too, need to overcome national barriers and confront capital on a global scale. While not the only strategy to be pursued by labor in today's world, without international solidarity, in the long term, labor's prospects for defending workers' rights against global corporations and governments that are increasingly dominated by a rhetoric of global competitiveness are dim.[1]

Although international solidarity has been a goal stated by the global labor movement ever since the First International, labor has in practice generally struggled with achieving it. While other obstacles to solidarity exist, one of the major pitfalls is a lack of what could be called a "felt solidarity" among workers in different countries. Most existing research implicitly or explicitly agrees that workers' stable cross-border solidarity involves more than a mere community of interests: while a shared (material) interest or goal among workers in different countries is the primordial basis for solidarity, stable relationships of solidarity require a mutual identification among workers, or a felt solidarity, at the rank-and-file level that goes beyond a common material interest. Such a shared identity is usually based on an understanding of common challenges and goals but can also result from shared political visions or similar histories, among other factors.

A lack of a shared identity is often associated with the bureaucratic character of official international labor solidarity, which is usually carried out at the level of union leaderships. Limited rank-and-file involvement prevents direct cross-border contact at the grassroots level, which could promote an understanding of the "others'" specific conditions, problems, and struggles and, thus, of commonalities. Relationships with workers abroad are hence frequently dominated by prejudices and distrust, as workers (and leaderships) often know little about the situation of workers in other countries

and thus have no basis for engaging in international solidarity activities. Also, relationships of international solidarity imply the allocation of scarce resources that might otherwise be used for more immediate local or national goals.

Consequently, there is often a general reluctance to engage with workers abroad beyond the attainment of immediate common interests, and it is no surprise that international relationships do not generally form part of most unions' everyday policies, especially at the level of union locals, where the focus lies on everyday bread-and-butter issues. Hence, few unions have an explicitly internationalist orientation and maintain relationships of solidarity that go beyond short- or medium-term strategic alliances for specific goals.

So far, the academic debate has failed to deal with a recent development that could have an important impact on the felt solidarity between workers across borders and on unions' willingness to engage in international relationships: transnational migration. In a context of global economic restructuring, increasing transnational economic and social interconnections, as well as enhanced transport and communication technologies and global media that bring people together around the globe, workforces are also becoming more and more transnational in many countries.[2]

With neoliberal globalization causing the layoff of millions of workers and destroying livelihoods in many, especially Southern, countries, international migration flows are growing. In many of the main migration-
receiving countries, migrants represent an increasing share of the workforce—and, with some delay, union membership.

At the same time, many migrants today are what has been called "transmigrants": they have a feeling of belonging to both their "home" and "host" countries and, while being in the latter, maintain strong personal and emotional relationships to families, communities, and organizations in the former. In fact, migrants' concern for families and communities "back home" are today often institutionalized in the form of clubs and organizations that are engaged in migrants' communities of origin, and migrants' financial remittances reach unprecedented amounts. As has been shown by the growing field of transnational migration studies, the emergence of "transnational societal spaces" (Pries 2008) can have important economic, social, and cultural effects on both sending and receiving communities and countries.

This contribution explores the consequences transnational migration has for international labor solidarity. Based on insights from transnational migration research and international labor solidarity theory, exploratory empirical research in two US labor unions has been conducted. It is argued that the cross-border ties and emotional bonds many contemporary migrant-origin union members maintain can potentially facilitate labor solidarity between migrants' destination and origin countries. The argument here is twofold: First, that the close social ties and emotional bonds that many migrants maintain to their countries and communities of origin can help overcome the lack of a felt solidarity across borders and promote a solidarity that has practical meaning for workers. Second, that the concern many migrants have for their country of origin, as well as their relationships to organizations back home, can promote a more internationalist orientation in unions, contribute to broadening unions'

understanding of solidarity, and introduce international relationships with migrants' origin countries into unions' everyday policies.

This chapter is structured as follows: In the second section, some of the main insights of transnational migration research are presented. In the third section, the foundations of and some major obstacles to international labor solidarity are discussed. In the fourth section, the results from the empirical research are presented. Subsequently, some remarks on the findings and thoughts on migrants' possibilities of influencing unions are given, followed by some conclusions.

The Era of Transnational Migration

International migration has for a long time constituted an important feature of human livelihoods. Driven by economic globalization and neoliberal restructuring, international migration has sharply increased in recent decades; today, more people than ever before live abroad. The number of persons leaving their country of origin reached 232 million in 2013, or 3.2 percent of the world's population, up from 154 million in 1990 (United Nations 2013). South–North migration makes up half of the total. According to recent United Nations data, in 2013, 81.9 million migrants residing in the Global North were born in the Global South, and 82.3 million international migrants who were born in the South resided in the South. In the same year, 59 percent of all international migrants resided in Northern countries, up from 53 percent in 1990 (United Nations 2013).

At the same time, in the last thirty years, migration research indicates that traditional forms of migration have been complemented by a type of migration that is increasingly *transnational*:[3] pushed by global economic restructuring and accelerated by economic and cultural globalization as well as by advanced long-distance transport and communication technologies, many migrants are today able to travel back and forth and to maintain emotional bonds and close communication with relatives back home. As early as 1994, Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc, in their seminal contribution *Nations Unbound*, stated that many of today's migrants "develop networks, activities, patterns of living, and ideologies that span their home and the host society" (Basch et al. 2005/1994, 4; see also Portes et al. 1999). They showed that many contemporary immigrants no longer fit the traditional conception of either "coming to stay," uprooted from their old home country and adopting a new one, or coming only temporarily and going back to their home country after a short period of time. The growing research field of transnational studies that has emerged since the 1990s instead stresses that for many migrants today, migration is no longer a temporary move from one place to the other but a permanent condition.

Through migrants' praxis, "transnational societal spaces" (Pries 2008) or "transnational social fields" (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004) are constituted, sited between or above the origin and destination countries or regions (Pries 2001). In these spaces, not only do migrants move back and forth, but they also circulate financial remittances and material goods, as well as nonmaterial goods such as information, ideas, perceptions, practices, and social capital—so-called "social remittances" (Levitt 1998). It has also been shown that in these spaces, migrants and nonmigrants

frequently lead lives that are increasingly plurilocal and that they develop "transnational identities" (for example, Vertovec 2001) or "transnational ways of belonging" (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004), with their loyalties and senses of belonging linked to both the home and the host country or community—often even after having lived in the new country for decades, and frequently including not only first-generation migrants but also their children (Basch et al. 2005/1994; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Pries 2010).

Clearly, this is not true for all migrants. Also, this type of transmigrant is not entirely new—also many migrants in earlier phases of international migration have maintained transnational connections to families and relatives in their countries of origin. However, the extent to which migrants are able to exchange information, goods, and ideas across borders is today significantly larger. Also, migrants' transnational ties take new forms. Not only has the amount of financial remittances that migrants send back reached unprecedented amounts, but migrants' continued concern for and involvement in origin communities and countries today is also institutionalized as never before.

Through migrant clubs and organizations that link migrant origin and destination countries such as the so-called hometown associations, migrants often stay institutionally linked to their own or their parents' country or community of origin. Through them, migrants participate in their origin communities' cultural, political, and social lives (Goldring 2002; Moctezuma and Pérez Veyna 2006; Morán Quiroz 2005). Such organizations are usually involved in cultural activities, and many aim at promoting social and economic development back home. Their activities reach from financing cultural activities such as village or religious celebrations to investing in public infrastructure and local entrepreneurship and have, in many cases, significantly contributed to the improvement of infrastructure in many communities (Orozco 2004; Portes et al. 2007; Escala-Rabadán et al. 2005).

Also, many migrants today stay politically and socially involved in their countries of origin, engaging in, for instance, party politics or lobby groups. In what has been called "homeland politics" (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2001), migrants frequently use their position abroad to lobby their home countries' governments and other institutions and politically, financially, or militarily support democracy and other social movements. Many sending-country political parties and other organizations have come to view the migrant community as important actors in their homeland's politics and have established offices in cities with major expatriate communities (Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Levitt 2001).

As will be argued below, transnational migration can have significant effects on unions' international solidarity work. The personal cross-border ties and emotional commitment migrants have to their countries of origin can potentially help overcome what is in practice often a major obstacle to functioning international solidarity relationships: the lack of a felt solidarity and a solidarity taking place at the grassroots level. Also, they can promote the establishment of solidarity relationships with migrants' origin countries where they did not exist before, thus challenging unions' frequently limited commitment to international solidarity work beyond immediate

short-term goals.

Obstacles to International Solidarity: The Lack of a Felt Solidarity and the Limited Commitment to International Work

Few contributions deal with international labor solidarity in an explicitly theoretical manner.[4] However, most of those that do, as well as a rich body of empirical literature, agree that international solidarity, as solidarity more generally, is based on more than a mere community of interests. Evidently, the fundamental basis of labor solidarity is a shared goal of workers: the solidarity in labor unions, in contrast to other types of solidarity groups such as families or societies, is fundamentally based on a commonality of interests vis-à-vis a common opponent, the employer. More broadly, labor solidarity is a *goal-oriented* solidarity, in which a common goal is to be achieved through collective action (see Bayertz 1999; Fantasia 1988; Hyman 1975). It is thus always strategic, to a significant degree, and this is also true for international solidarity.

However, clearly some sort of shared identity or sense of togetherness is indispensable for stable solidary relationships, also in the case of unions (see, for example, Bayertz 1999; Hanagan 2003; Hyman 2002; Kay 2011; Lindberg 2011; Novelli 2011; Zeuner 2004; for a historical perspective, see Van der Linden 2003). In fact, what distinguishes solidarity from an exclusively strategic collaboration among individuals to attain a specific goal is that it involves a willingness to assist others, either for the sake of a long-term goal, based on a shared vision or belief, or because of a sentiment of being in the same boat—even without an immediate return for oneself (Bayertz 1999).

Thus, stable solidary relationships between unions that go beyond the short-term attainment of concrete goals presuppose at least a minimum degree of shared identity or felt solidarity among those involved.[5] In fact, common interests are not always self-evident but need to be framed as such in order to constitute a foundation for common action—that is, ideas and perceptions play a crucial role in unions' identities and goals (Hyman 1999, 94–115; Kay 2011; Novelli 2011; Offe and Wiesenthal 1980; Zeuner 2004). Shared values and identities are thus always, to a certain degree, constructed—what Featherstone (2012) calls the "productive character" of solidarity. While a mutual identification is usually based on a shared interest resulting from having the same employer or working in the same sector, it can also emerge from other sources, such as shared political visions, similar experiences, or even sex or ethnicity (Hanagan 1980; Zeuner 2004; Zoll 2000).

In practice, while not the only challenge, the lack of a felt solidarity often constitutes a serious obstacle to the formation of stable international solidarity relationships. The lack of a sense of togetherness among workers in different countries often hinders functioning solidary relationships, as neither union members nor leaders are particularly willing to commit to the continuous support of their partners and assign significant amounts of resources to them.

The lack of such felt solidarity is often linked to few possibilities for direct cross-border contact and communication among workers and leaders: most official international solidarity work is located at the level of union leaderships and consists of declarations and conferences that entail few concrete solidarity activities involving the rank and file. Accordingly, international solidarity often has no relevance for members' everyday practice. This lack of embeddedness in unions' everyday work has been considered a major reason for the ephemerality of international union alliances (Moody 1997a; Waterman 1998; Zeuner 2004). In such a context, and further aggravated by a language barrier separating workers in most countries, for members and low-level leaders in different countries, few opportunities exist for learning about each other's concrete situations and struggles.[6] Without communicating and interacting with partners abroad, however, it is difficult for workers to reach an understanding of shared challenges and goals and develop a relationship of trust and partnership (Brecher et al. 2006; Gajewska 2008; Hoffmann 2004; Kay 2011; Stillerman 2003). Only through learning about each others' struggles and by being involved in international solidarity activities can these acquire a practical meaning for workers, thus becoming a "lived solidarity."

Instead, given the general absence of cross-border contact among workers, workers (and leaderships) usually know little about the situation of workers in other countries. Thus, the perception of workers abroad is in practice often dominated by ignorance and prejudices, and misunderstandings and resentments impede the acknowledgment of common goals that would provide the basis for solidarity. This is especially true in North–South contexts, where employers pit workers against each other by exploiting lower wage levels in the latter to extract concessions from workers in Northern countries.

Given the little contact that union memberships (and leaderships) have with workers abroad, there is often little interest in engaging in activities with them. As international solidarity relationships imply the allocation of scarce resources that might otherwise be used for more immediate local or national goals, often a reluctance to engage with workers abroad beyond the attainment of immediate common interests exists—even if such relationships could prove useful in the long term: international relationships do not generally form part of most unions' policies and action repertoires, especially at the level of union locals, where the focus lies on everyday, immediate issues.

Also, with most unions, at least in so-called developed countries, understanding of unionism and solidarity is limited to defending their membership's economic interests; activities going beyond fighting for higher wages and better working conditions rarely form part of unions' routine activities (Nastovski 2014).[7] On the international level, this translates into solidarity policies that are generally limited to activities in defense of shared economic goals, such as attempts at international collective bargaining or the negotiation of Global Framework Agreements (ibid.). Hence, few unions have an explicitly internationalist orientation and maintain solidary relationships that go beyond short- or medium-term strategic alliances for specific goals and that include, for instance, solidarity activities with social movements and other groups pursuing broader social justice agendas (ibid.). In fact, the limited engagement in establishing

long-term solidarity relationships going beyond immediate short-term goals has been considered a major obstacle to international labor solidarity, as it is usually too late to build them when solidarity is actually needed (Brecher et al. 2006; Lillie and Martínez Lucio 2004).

International Labor Solidarity in an Era of Transnational Migration: Strenghtening a Felt Solidarity and Promoting Solidarity with Migrants' Origin Countries

Migration has an important impact on labor unions. With increasingly transnational workforces, union memberships also become increasingly transnational, particularly in some traditionally "migrant" sectors of destination countries' economies.[8] This is, of course, not an entirely new phenomenon: historically, labor movements in many countries have been constituted, to a large degree, by migrants. In fact, it was often strongly politicized immigrants who, bringing political ideas and action repertoires from their origin countries, constituted the radical basis of newly emerging unions, especially in such immigration countries as the United States (Montgomery 1984).

The insights from transnationalism research and international solidarity theory described in the previous sections suggest, however, that transnational migration may have further impacts. Based on empirical research, I argue in this paper that migrants' ties and emotional commitment to their origin countries can contribute to strengthening solidarity between unions in their destination and origin countries: the social and emotional bonds that many migrants maintain to their countries and communities of origin can help overcome the lack of a felt solidarity and lend practical meaning to solidarity. Also, the relationships they maintain to organizations in their countries of origin can promote an increased willingness to engage in international activities and, where no solidarity relations with these countries exist, lead to their initiation. More specifically, I argue that

- Migrants' transnational identities result in many migrant union members having a particular concern for and emotional commitment to working with their country of origin, which constitutes an emotional basis for their engagement in international solidarity.
- Migrants' language and cultural skills, as well as an at least basic knowledge of their country of origin, enable them to relate more easily to the partners in that country, allowing them to *build personal relationships that enable a low-threshold cross-border communication and information exchange* among workers and local-level staff that *strengthen a shared identity and personal connectedness and lend practical meaning to solidarity*.
- The particular concern that many migrants have for their countries of origin, as well as their relationships to organizations in those countries, can *promote a stronger willingness to participate in international work* in their union, broaden the union's understanding of solidarity, and lead to *the initiation of solidarity relationships with origin countries* where such relations did not exist before.

Data and Methodology

Exploratory empirical research was conducted in two US labor unions. The United States is, in absolute numbers, the world's largest migration-destination country (United Nations 2013). Foreign-born workers represented 16.5 percent of the workforce in 2014 (BLS 2015), many of whom maintain close transnational social ties to their countries and communities of origin, making the United States the paradigmatic case of a transnational migration destination country (Pries 2001). Some US unions started organizing migrant workers in the late 1980s and the 1990s, with the result that migrant membership rates are substantial, particularly in sectors such as property services, construction, or food processing, where migrants represent the majority of union members in some high-migration regions (Luce and Bank Muñoz 2008; Milkman 2006; Ness 2005; Nissen and Grenier 2001).

The research was carried out at the United Steelworkers (USW) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). More specifically, it was conducted at two regional entities of these unions, as it is at the local and regional rather than the national union level where the role of migrants (as members and low-level union staff generally)[9] most likely manifests itself. The two entities studied were District 7 of the USW, covering Illinois and Indiana, and the California-based United Service Workers West (USWW) local of SEIU.

In the case of the USW, the group studied consisted of first- and second-generation Mexican migrants, which represent about 15 to 20 percent of the district's membership. While some are first-generation migrants, the majority is second generation. In the particular area studied (Chicago and Northwest Indiana), their number is significantly higher in some locals, reaching up to 90 percent in some smaller locals.[10] The focus lay on the long-standing alliance this union has with the Mexican mineworkers union, Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Mineros, Metalúrgicos, Siderúrgicos y Similares (Los Mineros), which is intended by the union leaderships to eventually lead to a merger of both unions. Similar to many other classical industrial unions, the USW has a relatively long history of international solidarity work, and Mexico is strategically important for the USW, as many employers have plants in Mexico or threaten to relocate production to Mexico (if they have not yet done so).

As in most unions, the international solidarity work is mostly carried out at the national union leadership level; the district researched, however, is strongly involved in the work with Los Mineros, as the then district director had for many years promoted cross-border solidarity work taking place on the regional level. Activities in the district include regular worker-to-worker exchanges and other visits to Mexico, as well as marches, rallies, fund-raising activities, and other actions in support of Mexican colleagues.

In the case of USWW, the research was conducted in the janitorial division of the local in Los Angeles, where (mostly first-generation) Salvadoran migrants represent about 30 percent of the membership. Here, the focus was on the establishment of relationships with organizations in El Salvador. Being a services sector union, SEIU

does not have a comparably long history of international solidarity, and El Salvador, being a very small country with no large services corporations headquarters, has in recent years not been of much strategic interest for SEIU's international work. Thus, on the national union level, no formal relationships of solidarity exist with organizations in El Salvador.

In the last ten to fifteen years, however, Salvadoran members and staff of USWW have promoted a series of solidarity activities with an organization in El Salvador—the former guerrilla organization and now political party Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional [FMLN])[11]—such as organizing events at the local for FMLN representatives to speak to the Salvadoran community, conducting fund-raising activities, or sending the local president to the inauguration of the newly elected FMLN president of El Salvador. At the same time, at the national union level of SEIU, relationships with Salvadoran labor unions are being promoted by a Salvadoran-origin member of the national union's executive committee.

The research mainly focused on USWW's work with the FMLN, but it also included interviews on the national union level. It had an exploratory character: given the virtually nonexistent research on the relationship between transnational migration and international labor solidarity, it was conducted in an open manner with the aim of detecting possible ways in which migrants may influence unions' international work—rather than verifying preestablished hypotheses. Interviews were conducted with elected union officers, staff, and active members mainly on the district or local levels, and a few on the national level, between October 2013 and February 2014. Given that the children of migrants often maintain transnational social ties and transnational identities also, both first- and second-generation migrants were included in the research.

Transnational Identities: Migrants' Emotional Bonds to Their Country of Origin as a Basis for International Solidarity

As mentioned above, transnational migration research stresses that migrants frequently develop "transnational identities," or "ways of belonging," and that they stay emotionally connected with and politically and socially engaged in their origin country, frequently through organizations such as the above-mentioned hometown associations, political parties, and other political or social groups. The research shows that this continued concern for their countries of origin can lead to a particular support of solidarity work with those countries and to an emotional foundation for that work: while it would be exaggerated to claim that migrant union members *in general* have a particular concern for their origin countries, let alone for unions there, it was certainly the case of the Salvadorans in the SEIU local that many of them continued to be emotionally and politically engaged with El Salvador and particularly committed to working with the FMLN.

In fact, as will be discussed below, it was their emotional bonds and personal relationships to Salvadoran organizations that initiated and maintained the solidarity

work. This is not surprising: it is often argued that Central American, and especially Salvadoran, migrants—who fled civil wars in their countries—are particularly politicized and well organized (Landolt et al. 1999; Milkman 2006).

This was clearly true in the case researched: a large part of the Salvadoran members had been active in El Salvador either directly with the guerrillas or in their support, and many had lost relatives and friends through attacks by the military.[11] Hence, they had a strong political consciousness, and for them, unionism involved more than the defense of members' economic interests and could not be separated from the broader struggle for social justice. As one organizer explained,

> [The property services division of the union] was created in the eighties, by all the immigrants from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, who were fleeing from the war. So there is a lot of people who have a tremendous social conscience, there is people who fled so that they didn't kill them . . . it's more conscious people. And for defending their rights as workers or their social rights, in their countries, they killed them. So they come to this country, and they notice that they can struggle and they don't kill them . . . it has a lot to do with that the Salvadorans practically come out of a civil war, very recent.[12]

Migrants' previous involvement with the guerrillas and in some cases labor unions in El Salvador translated into a particular interest in political and social developments in the country, and into a continued involvement with the FMLN (and occasionally labor unions) there and in Los Angeles. The FMLN's fight, as well as other social movements' struggles for social justice in other countries, constituted for many of them fights that naturally had to be supported by their union. As one rank-and-file leader active in the FMLN solidarity work explained,

> We have to talk about this. . . . To get involved as union here . . . with the unions there, in El Salvador. With all Central America. . . . So we have to see how to organize and join more strongly with [our union here]. . . . We would have to talk on a Central American level, so that everyone gets involved. Because one country's struggle is the struggle of all. All Central America. It's everybody's struggle. Because if one country wins, we all win. And if one country loses, we all lose. Because you can see how the situation is in these countries because of the [US] Republicans' [policies]. . . . A lot of dirty politics, supported by the Republicans. . . . If we are not able to solve our problems here, it is because there they are also not solved. Right? If we start organizing there, they [the employers, the powerful] get afraid here. Because together, we, the peoples, are strong. So there is the basis for our struggle here. So I believe we have to mobilize on an international level, to improve working conditions here.[13]

It was out of this understanding of unionism, social struggle, and migrants' continued support of the FMLN's social justice agenda[14] that they promoted work with the FMLN in USWW. This was especially true after the FMLN won the presidential election in 2009, which raised migrants' expectations for political and social improvements in El Salvador.

Interestingly, Mexican migrants' engagement in international solidarity in the USW case was also often at least partly informed by a personal connectedness to their (or their parents') country of origin: it is usually argued that compared to Central Americans, Mexican migrants are not so committed to political or labor organizations

back home, as it is assumed that they have negative experiences with Mexican unions and politics, if any.[15]

However, in the researched case, many Mexican-origin USW members and staff were particularly interested in the work with Los Mineros and in participating in worker-to-worker exchanges.[16] They were often among the strongest supporters and the first ones to volunteer for tasks related to the solidarity work. Most of the members and staff who were particularly strongly involved in the solidarity work on a regular basis, and who repeatedly participated in worker-to-worker exchanges, were of migrant origin. At the very least, migrants were in general the ones to oppose the solidarity work least: while they sometimes shared other members' opinion that the union should deal with its own problems instead of spending money for workers abroad, they usually did not share the common stereotypes about Mexican workers, given their own background and their deep knowledge of Mexico and its working conditions in the case of first-generation migrants and, in the case of second-generation migrants, their at least basic knowledge of Mexico.

However, the basis for Mexican migrants' commitment to the solidarity work was different from the Salvadorans': while in the case of the Salvadorans it was informed by their political convictions and former political involvement in El Salvador, in the case of Mexican migrants, it was the personal and emotional bonds to their own or their parents' country of origin that constituted the basis for their involvement. But it was seldom a commitment to improving the conditions in Mexico or their hometowns more generally, as one might assume from the experiences with hometown associations; instead, the commitment of Mexican migrants—many of whom were second generation—was mostly based on a general sense of personal relatedness to Mexico and an interest in learning more about workers and the labor movement back home. Thus, while all members and staff I spoke to were strongly convinced that the solidarity with Los Mineros was politically necessary in the context of the North American Free Trade Agreement and common employers, for many Mexican-origin migrants their background was a factor strengthening their commitment.

Variation between migrants existed; however, it was particularly true for migrants who came to the United States as an adolescent or adult, who maintained close emotional bonds to their country of origin and frequently visited relatives. Some of these also felt a commitment to improving conditions in Mexico more generally and were involved in altruistic organizations focused on their communities of origin.

In contrast, many second-generation migrants, and migrants who had migrated as children, did not feel as strong an emotional bond to Mexico. But whether they did or not strongly depended on how they had been raised in the United States: in line with insights from transnationalism studies, many second-generation migrants were raised with a strong awareness of their "roots" and had a strong emotional bond to their parents' country of origin. In fact, some of the second-generation migrants interviewed were particularly strongly committed to the work with Los Mineros. As one of them explained, the work gave him the opportunity to learn more about his parents' country of origin—his own roots—and made him feel more like a "real Mexican":

> When I go there . . . I feel like a true Mexican, and to me that means a lot. Because it would have meant a lot to my dad and my mom . . . I just feel proud. . . . When I go to Mexico, I feel like I am a Mexican born in Mexico. Because the *mineros* . . . won't treat you any different than they do another Mexican. . . . I am a Mexican here, but there is Mexican and Mexican. And [a first-generation migrant member] don't understand it because he is from Mexico. But for me . . . it means a lot.[17]

The findings hence suggest that, while not true for all migrants, and although variation between migrant groups exists, many migrant union members show a particular concern for the solidarity with their countries of origin—and that their political, or personal-emotional, bonds to these countries can constitute the basis of a felt solidarity.

Strengthening a "Felt Solidarity" Through Migrants' Cross-Border Relationships

Even more important, migrants' background and transnational identity allow them to establish personal relationships with members of the partner union more easily than their nonmigrant colleagues, thereby overcoming the notorious lack of personal relationships between workers in different countries. This was clearly the case in the USW-*mineros* relationships.

While the district director actively promoted direct cross-border contact between workers and local-level staff through the worker-to-worker exchanges, it was mostly the presence of migrants in the union that actually made the establishment of close personal relationships possible. With almost no exceptions, the numerous personal cross-border relationships at the level of elected local officers, staff, and even many regular members were maintained, on the USW side, by Mexican migrants. In fact, many developed friendships with mineros and stayed in touch even after their return from visits to Mexico. Nonmigrant participants in the exchanges, with almost no exception, did not maintain such contact. Several of the interviewed migrant members and staff communicated on a regular basis with their partners via e-mail, social networks such as Facebook, and phone, and the Americans brought their colleagues items from the United States they asked for, such as mobile phones and other technical goods.

To a large extent, the reason was that migrants are able to actually *communicate* with mineros: given that the language barrier is, in most international solidarity relationships, a major practical obstacle to the establishment of close relationships, the fact that migrants could communicate with mineros in Spanish without depending on translators is a significant advantage for forging such relationships:[18] being able to talk directly to each other allows for an easier and more informal exchange beyond the official work-related communication that can touch on personal topics, which is the basis for the establishment of friendships. As one interview partner explained:

> It is a little different because I, you know, I can fit right in, because if they start joking around, or whatever, I get it. And even [the district director] sometimes, he speaks Spanish . . . but if you're joking around, it's a little different, and he misses a lot of parts when they're joking around. I don't. So I can relate a lot easier with them. . . . Even [the second-

> generation migrant assistant to the district director], he was born and raised in the US, so really he misses a lot of things, even though he speaks Spanish. . . . So yeah, it's a little easier for me, and even I believe for them, the guys in Mexico, too, because like, they wanna relate certain messages to [the district director] or to the Steelworkers. . . . I think they feel comfortable relating their message to me more than relating it to [them]. . . . In the translation, they miss a lot of things.[19]

Furthermore, as migrant members and staff were usually the only ones to speak Spanish, they were employed by the union leadership as translators in the solidarity work in general, and the exchanges in particular. Hence, many of them participated in the exchanges more than once, and the repeated contact with colleagues abroad gave them the opportunity of strengthening these relationships.

Beyond the language factor, it was also a *lower cultural barrier* that allowed migrants to relate more easily to the Mexican partners: migrant-origin members and staff often stated that their background being from Mexico broke the ice in the initial communication with colleagues, and that it created an immediate mutual understanding. Even when compared to the few nonmigrants who spoke Spanish, the relationships migrants built were generally stronger and, importantly, less formal: although most interviewees emphasized that the relationships were, above all, based on a shared political commitment and struggle, migrants in many cases related more easily to mineros. In the case of most first-generation (and some second-generation) migrants, this is partly due to their ability to communicate in a colloquial manner, allowing them to jump right in to informal conversations that mineros were having.

Beyond their colloquial language skills, the main reason is of course that many migrant-origin members are familiar with Mexican culture and habits and have at least an implicit knowledge of Mexico and an understanding of how things work there. While such knowledge comprised labor unions only in few cases, it included a broad scope of other issues related to Mexican politics and society, among them, political parties and elections, the long history of Partido Revolucionario Institucional rule in Mexico, the ubiquitous corruption, the drug war, and, in some cases, unions' history of institutional entanglement with the state. In fact, most of the migrant members and staff involved in the solidarity work had a broader interest in the political and economic situation in Mexico: many kept themselves up to date on developments in that country, mostly through Mexican newspapers and news and through communicating with friends and relatives residing there, as well as with their parents in the United States. Many stated that they could not "disconnect" and "forget about it" after their return from Mexico—as many nonmigrant members could—but felt the need to be further involved and informed about the developments in Mexico.

Such knowledge evidently makes it easier for them to situate topics discussed, and enables a communication in which not every issue touched upon needs to be explained, thus also providing a basis for further communication via e-mail or on the phone after their return to the United States. While this is clearly not true for all union members and staff of Mexican origin, where it is true, it makes relating and establishing and maintaining relationships to partners abroad considerably easier.

Importantly, these relationships enabled a cross-border communication and information exchange that gave practical meaning to solidarity and promoted a shared identity and felt solidarity among those involved. The regular communication between migrants and mineros included a series of topics, from personal issues to political issues and information directly related to the union and solidarity work—among others, general information on the situation in Mexico, such as the security situation in the country, the war on drugs, and the political situation, particularly regarding topics related to the labor movement, such as the huge 2013 teachers' strike and the Mexican government's attack on unions; the situations and current struggles of their respective unions (such as the Los Mineros president's exile in Canada and his prospects of coming back to Mexico); and more specific issues directly related to the union work and their solidarity relationships, such as current contract negotiations and concrete union activities that had been conducted or were planned.

In fact, as in the quotation cited above, interview partners stated that their Mexican colleagues on some occasions addressed them for specific support activities, rather than the local, district, or national USW leadership: sometimes, requests for specific information or training were communicated directly to them, who then communicated them to the leadership. Furthermore, many migrants and mineros regularly exchanged newspaper articles not only on the general political and economic situation in Mexico but also on topics more closely linked to union issues, such as policy reforms concerning unions and workers more generally.

Through this regular information exchange, the workers, staff, and officers involved had a better understanding of their partners' situation and their current struggles and needs. Being involved in and understanding the current developments concerning the Mexican union, and discussing them with the partners, transformed the alliance into a lived solidarity. The information exchange provided the basis for a sense of togetherness and an understanding of shared challenges and goals, especially by uncovering employers' strategies of pitting workers in the United States and Mexico against each other. For instance, the workers talked to were very aware of employers' tactics of threatening to relocate production to Mexico and the United States, respectively, and of keeping to safety standards committed to in a Global Safety Agreement in the United States, while not keeping to them in Mexico. Overall, the workers and staff who maintained a close cross-border communication identified strongly with the Mineros and their struggles, usually stressing the commonality of interests and the goals uniting them.

Promoting International Solidarity: Establishing Relationships with Migrants' Countries of Origin

Finally, transnational migration can promote unions' willingness to engage in and broaden their understanding of international solidarity, and it can, where no relationships with migrants' origin countries exist, lead to the establishment of such relationships. This was clearly the case of the SEIU local in Los Angeles.

As mentioned above, SEIU, being a service sector union, does not have as strong an

international solidarity history as many industrial unions, although it has in recent years been engaged in a number of global corporate campaigns. As such campaigns are highly strategic and usually involve unions mostly in corporations' home countries and other large markets, SEIU does not have established solidarity relationships with Salvadoran unions, given the low strategic importance of such a small country. Also, beyond these strategic campaigns, international solidarity is, as for most unions, not an important part of SEIU's everyday activities, particularly not on the local level.

However, in USWW, through migrants' efforts, this limited engagement in international solidarity and the narrow understanding of it have altered in recent years, as Salvadoran migrant staff and members have initiated solidarity activities with El Salvador. And while these activities occasionally involve unions, they are mostly with the FMLN—which is remarkable, given the generally very strategic and direct benefit-oriented character of international solidarity.

According to the local's assistant to the president, these activities began around fifteen years ago and would have been unthinkable before large numbers of highly politicized Salvadorans entered the union in the 1980s and 1990s. Out of their continued concern for El Salvador and their loyalty to the FMLN, many Salvadoran migrant staff and members are strongly engaged in promoting such solidarity activities as those mentioned above. They do so mainly through their contacts with the FMLN in El Salvador and the FMLN exile organizations in Los Angeles, such as El Rescate and the Central American Resource Center;[20] some of the Salvadoran-origin members are strongly involved with the Salvadoran political community in Los Angeles, and some are active in or have previously worked for FMLN exile organizations. For instance, one staff person working in the local's political department stated that it was due to his seventeen years of work for El Rescate that he was able to establish relationships between the union and the FMLN and the Salvadoran government, as members of the FMLN community and the FMLN-led Salvadoran consulate frequently approach him with requests for the local's support in other initiatives in electoral campaigns.

> Three of the years I have worked here, I worked in the Political Department. And this allowed me to maintain relationships with . . . not only with the FMLN . . . but also with the Salvadoran government. So this way we could bring Mauricio Funes[21] here in his first term as president. We had him at a dinner here. So that's part of the work we have done. But again, my main contact was through having worked in that organization.[22]

Importantly, the activities, while not being part of an official union policy, go beyond a level of occasional activities organized by individual members pursuing their particularistic interests. They take place on a regular basis and seem to naturally form part of the unions' political work. They are decided upon in the local's decision-making structures, often initiated or promoted by staff and leadership, many of whom are themselves migrants.

In fact, most activities are organized by staff persons or by Salvadoran-origin members in the local's Committee on Political Education (COPE), which is the body in charge of the local's electoral political work, such as endorsing political candidates in elections, and which administers its own funds. Many of the COPE's most

outspoken leaders are Salvadoran migrants, and it is here that most of these activities are decided upon and planned. Furthermore, some of the most active promoters of the work with the FMLN are staff persons in the union, and they use their position in the union and their influence on the USWW president for promoting such activities—as one staff person put it, "to keep the president up to date" on Salvadoran issues.

And the local's president himself, a second-generation Mexican migrant politicized in the Chicano rights movement of the 1960s, supports the work with the FMLN. Given his own political background and the large migrant membership in the local, he clearly wants to promote migrants' interests, including activities with migrants' countries of origin. On one occasion, it was he who initiated the sending of election observers to El Salvador. Crucially in many cases, the solidarity activities involve the use of union funds, the assignment of which is generally approved by the local president or, in the case of funds administered by COPE, by the committee members. And the activities are generally supported by the membership: interview partners explained that apart from an occasional objection, there is usually little controversy in the decision-making bodies about the assignment of funds for them.

Interestingly, also on the national level of SEIU, initiatives to promote relationships with El Salvador have recently taken place. Sergio Salinas, the president of a local in Seattle and member of the national SEIU's executive committee, himself a Salvadoran migrant, has begun to promote a collaboration with Salvadoran unions. He has carried out several workshops and meetings with unionists in El Salvador, among other initiatives.

Having worked with unions in El Salvador before migrating in the early 1980s, and having maintained contact with them ever since, Salinas has promoted for a long time the idea of establishing relationships between SEIU and Salvadoran unions. This was strongly supported by former SEIU vice president Eliseo Medina (of Mexican origin) and then president Andy Stern, for both of whom, according to Salinas, the large Salvadoran-origin membership and the natural connection between SEIU and El Salvador was a strong argument for establishing such relationships. In the last couple of years, Salinas was able to establish relationships and, funded by the national SEIU, carry out meetings and training with several unions and union federations in El Salvador. Also, the SEIU intends to open an office with one staff person in San Salvador in the near future in order to ensure more continuity of the work, as Salinas explained.

While the work in El Salvador is supported by members of the national leadership, it clearly was Salinas's insistence and personal commitment that made it happen, especially given the limited strategic relevance of El Salvador to SEIU: while Salinas stressed that within Central America it made most sense strategically for SEIU to work with El Salvador, he also clearly stated that his personal interest, as well as that of one other Salvadoran-origin vice president of a New York local involved in the work, was a decisive factor in their engagement with Salvadoran unions.

Above all, it was thanks to Salinas's relationships to and knowledge of Salvadoran unions: not only did he already have contacts in the Salvadoran labor movement that he could build on, but his knowledge of unions and the labor relations system were

also crucial for reaching an agreement with Salvadoran partners on what to focus on and what SEIU could actually contribute. Knowing Salvadoran labor laws, Salinas stated that he understood the reasons for some of the fundamental difficulties of Salvadoran unions, such as their fragmentation and the high turnover at leadership levels. Subsequently, it was mainly based on this assessment that both sides agreed to focus on a political campaign aimed at changing the labor laws.

Furthermore, similar to what has been described for the USW, Salinas stressed that his background from El Salvador made the work with the Salvadoran partners easier and provided the basis for trustful personal relationships. In particular, it helped him establish an equal relationship among partners that avoided suspicions of paternalism against SEIU on the one hand and an expectation by the Salvadorans of SEIU simply providing resources on the other hand: according to Salinas, his personal background, knowledge of Salvadoran unions, and language skills allowed for a communication on equal terms that avoided the typical top-down character of most relationships between unions in the United States and Central America—which would have been difficult to establish for a nonmigrant. For instance, communicating on an equal level about money was significantly easier for him than it would have been for a "gringo," he explained:

> It's difficult for a gringo. Suppose he goes and has a conversation with the unions, with Salvadoran leaders, saying, "*No espere que le vamos a dar dinero*" ["Don't expect that we will give you money," pronounced with strong American accent —JJ], you understand? . . . But I say, as [name of a Salvadoran-origin colleague] and I did, "*Mire, compa, aquí queremos hacer un trabajo, mire, aquí, el dinero lo ponemos a un lado, vamos a ayudar, sí, pero*" ["Look, comrade, we want to do some work here, look, we'll put the money aside, we will help, yes, but" pronounced with Salvadoran accent —JJ] You understand? There is a cultural issue that you can't establish differently. . . . It's as if I wanted to go to Brazil, right? I don't think they would understand me, some words perhaps, (but) there must be a cultural connection. The people understood it, because it's the same message, "*No podemos darle dinero*" ["We cannot give you money," with American accent —JJ], and "*Mire compa, no se trata de eso, se trata de esto*" ["Look, comrade, it's not about this, it's about that," with Salvadoran accent —JJ]. And I am saying exactly the same thing, without the need to tell him, right? So I think that is important.[23]

Both in the Los Angeles local and in the national SEIU case, the presence of Salvadoran migrants in the union has thus led to the initiation of solidarity relationships with organizations in El Salvador. Through their emotional ties and relationships to organizations back home, as well as their knowledge of the country, migrants have promoted such relationships, thereby increasing the union's willingness to engage in such solidarity activities and contributing to broadening its understanding of solidarity.

Reason for Euphoria? Some Remarks on Migrants' (Limited) Influence on Unions

The results presented may seem to suggest that transnational migration will automatically promote international labor solidarity. However, this is hardly the case.

The intention here is not to argue that migrants in unions *necessarily* play the role described above—it is, rather, that their presence in unions can, under certain conditions, potentially have these effects.

First of all, given the exploratory character of the study that only included two regional sections of unions and two migrant groups and a limited number of interviews, the results are merely initial insights into the role migration can play in international labor solidarity. Further research is needed to verify and deepen them.

Even more important, whether the role migration can potentially play materializes depends on whether unions are actually willing (and able) to build on migrants' contributions and the possibilities of influence and freedom of action migrants have in their unions. This touches upon the question of internal democracy and rank-and-file participation in union policies, as well as on the role of (progressive) leaderships. Obviously, unions' character as bureaucratic organizations and their frequently hierarchical decision-making structures do not generally promote participation of the rank and file, and the "iron law of oligarchy" (Michels 1968/1911) suggests that for new groups, or the membership more broadly, it is difficult to alter unions' political orientation and functioning.

In the two cases studied, migrants encountered favorable conditions for influencing their unions' work: both national unions are very hierarchically structured and, on the regional levels studied, the decision-making power in both unions lies, ultimately, at the leadership level. However, in both cases when the research was conducted, the leadership was progressive, and the large migrant membership constituted a relevant factor in their political decisions. That might change with a different administration; however, at the time of this research, the leadership in each of these unions supported migrants' involvement in the unions' work. In the USW case, the district director actively supported members' and local staff's participation in the work with mineros, encouraging the establishment of personal cross-border relationships. In USWW, migrants had relatively large possibilities for influencing the local's work, given that migrants in general constituted by far the majority of the membership, and also the staff was mostly of migrant origin.

Obviously, such conditions are not always present. Importantly, migrants are in many unions still mainly viewed as a problem (because they are "difficult to organize" or mobilize, because they have special needs in terms of language, and so on), rather than as having numerous skills and knowledge that might potentially enrich unions.

Also, as mentioned, most international solidarity work is located at the national unions' leadership level or in specialized international affairs departments. While this study has shown that migrants can influence unions' international work at the local or regional level, it was not the main focus of the research whether, or to what degree, this might translate to the national union level. Although the case of the SEIU's incipient relationships with Salvadoran unions indicates that the presence of migrants can also have an impact on this level, it can be questioned whether this is the case in most unions, especially given the underrepresentation of migrants within unions' national leadership levels. Further research is needed.

Crucially, international labor solidarity is and will remain a strategic policy of

unions, not least because it requires the use of considerable resources. While transnational migration can promote and strengthen relationships with migrants' origin countries, in most cases, only where these countries are also strategically relevant to unions will they put considerable effort and resources into using the potential that migrants' ties represent. As migrants' origin countries are generally not the strategically most important countries for unions' international work, it remains to be seen to what degree migrants' connections will be used to forge such relationships.

Conclusion

Insights from transnationalism and international labor research suggest that in the current era of transnational migration and an increasingly transnational union membership, migrants' transnational identities and social ties to their origin countries can have an impact on the prospects for international labor solidarity. Specifically, this chapter has argued that transnational migration can strengthen a felt solidarity and lend practical meaning to solidarity and thus help overcome one of the major problems in unions' international solidarity relationships. Nevertheless, they give some initial insights into the ways in which transnational migration may impact on international labor solidarity and potentially help overcome some of its obstacles.

Explorative empirical research was conducted in two US labor unions with large migrant memberships and international solidarity work with Mexico and El Salvador, respectively. Concretely, the results showed that: 1) migrants' transnational identities and emotional bonds to their origin countries in many cases resulted in a particular interest in and commitment to working with partners in that country, and their commitment to this work was partly based on this personal emotional bonding; 2) due to their language and cultural skills and an at least basic knowledge of their country of origin, migrants could relate more easily to partners abroad and establish personal relationships that allowed for a low-threshold information exchange, thereby strengthening a shared identity across borders and giving practical meaning to international solidarity; and finally, 3) migrants' emotional ties and their relations to organizations in their origin country expanded the union's willingness to engage in international activities, broadened the union's understanding of international solidarity, and led to the initiation of solidarity relations with that country.

However, given the exploratory character of the research, the results need to be treated with caution, and further research is needed. Also, in both researched cases, migrants encountered favorable conditions that might not always be in place, such as progressive leaders aware of their migrant membership who promoted rank-and-file involvement and a heavily migrant staff and local leadership. The findings described in this chapter can thus not be taken as grounds for euphoria. Nevertheless, they give some initial insights into the ways in which transnational migration may impact on international labor solidarity and potentially help overcome some of its obstacles.

CHAPTER 4

Labor and Sustainable Development in Latin America: Rebuilding Alliances at a New Crossroads

Bruno Dobrusin

The transnationalization of the local and national economies in the last three decades has pushed labor movements to increase the efforts in building transnational solidarity as a tool of basic self-defense in a context of advancing neoliberal ideas and policies. The struggle for workers' rights has been reshaped in this context, and global solidarity became an integral part of building a movement that can challenge neoliberal globalization both at home and abroad.

This chapter discusses the struggles in Latin America during the past two decades, comparing two distinct situations and the possibilities of building a genuine solidarity movement that cuts across the continent but also across sectors, including social, environmental, and human rights movements in the process. The debate is based on a comparative analysis of two recent situations: first, the struggle against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) in the late 1990s and early 2000s; second, the ongoing struggles regarding development models and natural resource exploitation. These two moments in recent Latin American union action are essential to understanding the ways in which regional and global solidarity can look according to the different circumstances.

Building a transnational, global solidarity movement has been a subject of intense debate among labor academics (Lambert and Webster 2001; Munck 2009; Waterman 2008; Webster, Lambert, and Bezuidenhout 2008). The central question in these debates is whether labor's drive for global solidarity has been effective in challenging neoliberal globalization, and whether we have to think of new modes of global solidarity both "from above" and "from below."

While there are several different positions on this issue, this chapter grounds itself on the work of Peter Waterman and his conception of a Global Justice and Solidarity Movement (Waterman 2008). Waterman asserts that in the current context, the Global Justice and Solidarity Movement (GJSM) is the conception that better applies to labor's conditions and its possibilities of struggling at the global level. The GJSM is based on a broad articulation between labor unions, NGOs, social movements, and environmental movements that act mostly at the local level but need to connect internationally (Waterman 2008, 255–59). Waterman portrays the debates in the World Social Forum as an ideal such scenario. Waterman's view, in theoretical terms, fits into this chapter since it analyzes how unions, together with other civil society organizations, built and can continue to build a solidarity movement that focuses on

local struggles while remaining connected, in this case, at the continental level.

A central focus is on how "work" and unions can play a decisive role through the construction of such a solidarity movement. Workers' solidarity has been a practice for more than a century, but few times in the recent past have workers' organizations been undermined like they are today. It is therefore essential to look at the new alliances being built by the trade unions with social movements, but also at how the unions are reorganizing themselves to incorporate the new subjective identities that became a reality during the neoliberal project (De la Garza 2001).

In the last two decades, Latin America has been a testing ground for these novel alliances. The organization of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil—in opposition to the forum for the economic elite named the World Economic Forum—can be considered a product of the changes experienced by workers, their organizations, and social movements during the neoliberal period, both in democratic and nondemocratic contexts; a vast majority of the union-social movement alliances began under the dictatorial military governments of the 1970s.

This chapter then intends to bring light to the issue of building global solidarity and workers' internationalism from a South American point of view. The "globality" of the struggle is not associated only with the geographical characteristics—unions from across boundaries aligning with each other—but also, and mainly in this case, with broader sectors of society, including workers' alternative identities. This means incorporating the identities developed beyond the factory, and, specifically in Latin America, this includes the well-rooted territorial-community identity (Svampa 2008), which began to play a significant role again in recent decades due to the restructuring of society and the economy (Ospina 2004). The territorial identity began regaining salience when factories were being shut down under neoliberal restructuring, and informal working conditions were becoming dominant in the region. Unions became a representative of a minority of the working class, reinforcing the need for connection with territorial organizations.

For many trade unions, especially those considered as social movement–oriented, the question was how to reach those workers who were marginalized from formal representation and participation. This led to a process of shifting union alliances, dismantling the traditional form of unionism, and considering broader sectors of society as an integral part of the working class (Palomino 2005). These alliances were organized with community organizations, environmental movements, and social movements struggling against neoliberalism, mainly as a way to broaden the capacity to mobilize, but also due to the shifting realities that placed trade unions in a position of isolation that needed to be addressed. In addition to contributing to essential struggles against privatization and the dismantling of public services, the trade unions that pushed for the alliances with social movements also managed to gather popular support beyond their own ranks for their struggles against capital.

The coalition strategy at the national level also has a replica at the continental one, with the events debated herein. The first such occasion of continentalizing those local alliances took place in the struggle against the FTAA, which incorporated labor movements from across the continent in alliance with social movements and center-

left governments in rejecting an imperialist project that would have challenged the capacity of the continent to take an autonomous development path. The second moment is currently taking place and focuses on the process of resistance to a development model that has been referred to as the "Commodities Consensus" (Svampa 2013), which has been carried out by, mostly, center-left governments. The defeat of the FTAA represented a foundational moment for many left movements across the continent and a victory for labor in alliance with social movements.

The central question here is to explore whether that alliance, or a similar one, can be repeated today, in a context of advancing extractive-resource exploitation with phenomenal environmental, social, and political consequences for the continent, implemented under majority center-left governments. What are the challenges, limitations, and possibilities of that alliance today? The current crossroads represents a challenge for labor—due to its alliance with center-left administrations—but also an opportunity to revive the international solidarity that was intense during the neoliberal period but decreased in the post-2005 period, when post-neoliberal governments became commonplace in the majority of South American countries.

Latin American labor movements experienced dramatic changes during the 1990s, as a consequence of the deepening of neoliberal policies (beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s). Precarious working conditions, flexibilization of labor conditions, and the privatization of public services and state-owned companies represented the main elements of a policy that was an integral political strategy of elites throughout the world. The response of workers to the so-called austerity policies was resistance in the most varied forms, including increasing solidarity across borders and also across sectors. The demise of the national state as an institution capable of responding to neoliberal challenges led workers' organizations to target larger transnational structures and also to reorganize internally to include sectors of society that were excluded from the formal sector of the economy.

The struggle against the FTAA represented a centerpiece of anti-neoliberal mobilization that was already taking place on the ground in the local communities. The continent-wide project represented the ambition of US-led transnational capital, but it also provided the opportunity to build a counter-hegemonic movement. The organization of the Hemispheric Social Alliance (HSA), with labor in the center of the process, led to a mass movement mobilized throughout the region, eventually defeating the FTAA project in the Argentine coastal city of Mar del Plata in November 2005.

In the early 2000s, Latin America, especially South America, experienced a turn to the left, meaning the election of various left parties into government. Some can be clearly connected to the anti-neoliberal mobilization of the 1990s; others were more pragmatic political parties that were sensitive to popular demands (Boron 2013). Among others, we can include in this left-of-center momentum the governments of Evo Morales in Bolivia, Rafael Correa in Ecuador, Lula da Silva in Brazil, Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, and Néstor Kirchner in Argentina.[1]

The "pink tide" had in common, among other elements, an economic bonanza, mainly due to the export of primary commodities. The economic process became

known as the “Commodities Consensus,” meaning the exploitation of extractive resources (intensive transgenic agriculture, mining, oil, and gas) and the redistribution of a share of that wealth to the poorer sectors of society. While this economic model was successful in the first decade, it began to be resisted throughout the region once its impacts and limitations became obvious. Labor has been increasingly critical of many of its impacts, and so are social and environmental movements, especially at the local level.

A central issue analyzed in this chapter is whether an alliance like the HSA is possible today, in this context, and whether labor can lead it. The discussion around neoliberal free trade, and its rejection, was obvious enough for labor to participate in. The consequences on local industries would have been negative (as the case of Mexico after the North American Free Trade Agreement shows), and the weakening of labor organizations—in the view of a pro-capital transnational legislation—was forthcoming.

In the debate around the Commodities Consensus, the position of labor is harder to establish for two main reasons: unions are a central component of the structures supporting left administrations; and the environmental discussion places labor in a defensive mode, due to the presence of strong unions in the so-called dirty industries. Building transnational solidarity and cross-sectoral alliance has therefore become a challenging action, but one that can be achieved if certain conditions are met—chiefly, the return of social-movement unionism to its roots as a radical conception of labor movements, and the retrenchment from a government-dependent mobilization strategy.

This chapter is divided into four different sections. Section one discusses the building of the HSA and the role of labor in challenging the Washington Consensus. Section two explains the current dynamics of the Commodities Consensus and its oppositions. Section three addresses the role of transnational solidarity and whether it can be applied in the current context. Section four presents some concluding remarks.

The Struggle Against Free Trade Within the Washington Consensus

The neoliberal period in Latin America was firmly implemented from the mid-1980s onward, with the establishment of structural adjustment programs throughout the region as the only solution to state deficits and imbalance of payments. The so-called Washington Consensus was a set of policies composed mainly of privatization of public services and state-owned companies; flexible labor markets legislation; economic dependence on international financial institutions; state retrenchment; autonomy of the central banks; and the financialization of the economy.

This set of policies was implemented throughout the world, but in Latin America they had the effect of deepening the already existing high levels of inequality. While structural adjustment was implemented at the national level, the continentalization of economic policy was also an integral part of the neoliberal project. One example of this was the push first to create (successfully) the North American Free Trade

Agreement in 1994, and later on the intention to create a hemisphere-wide Free Trade Area of the Americas, a project that was dismissed as a result of years of struggles by labor, social movements, and center-left political parties.

The FTAA was a project that included thirty-four countries—every country in the hemisphere with the exception of Cuba—put forward by the United States government, with strong corporate support, but also pushed forward by the vast majority of the Latin American governments at the time. Neoliberalism had become the dominant political dogma among governments in every country of the region, even those that were governed by movements that historically supported import substitution industrialization, like PRI-ism (Partido Revolucionario Institucional) in Mexico and Peronism in Argentina.[2]

In the case of labor movements, the advance of neoliberal policies and ideology led to two reactions. One was a conservative side of the union movement—the majority in the countries with strong labor history—that negotiated with the administrations, leading to the survival of union structures and leadership at the cost of workers' benefits and rights. A more progressive element within labor reorganized unions, extended alliances with social movements, and began reshaping the idea of workers' demands. In many cases, these unions, particularly the Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT) in Brazil and the Central de los Trabajadores de la Argentina (CTA), were considered within the group of "social-movement unionism" (see Scipes 1992a, 1992b; Seidman 1994).[3]

This opening in the union movement represented a leading element in the mobilization against neoliberalism and also in reorganizing labor around novel demands and identities. These new conceptualizations came as a response to increasing informality, high unemployment, and the attack on unions as a central institution of social cohesion (De la Garza 2001; Novick 2001). As De la Garza remarks, the 1990s represented in Latin America not a work crisis, since it was not that jobs were lacking altogether, but rather a crisis of precariousness and informalization (De la Garza 2001, 27), in which the conventional form of trade unions was seriously hampered. The only real alternative for labor survival was to extend the conceptualization of the working class, and open union spaces to social movements and informal workers that had been historically excluded from the process of collective labor representation. This process was carried through to varying degrees, with some organizations, like the CTA in Argentina, completely reorganizing labor around a novel structure (Serdar 2012); others, like CUT in Brazil and Plenario Intersindical de Trabajadores–Convención Nacional de Trabajadores in Uruguay, led alliances with social movements without necessarily changing fully their internal functioning as unions.

In the context of advancing neoliberalization, and the reorganization of labor movements around new subjectivities, a sector of the labor movement led by the CUT in Brazil, later joined by other unions and social movements, organized the initial anti-FTAA campaigns in the late 1990s (Latimer 2014; Saguier 2007; Von Bulow 2009). The initial steps joined social movements and NGOs into the already existing trade-union forum that was running parallel to the official summits in the debates around the

FTAA. Eventually this alliance between diverse social sectors turned into a more formal organization under the name of the HSA, created in 1998 as an umbrella regional organization linking all the national chapters opposing the FTAA (Saguier 2007). The HSA included a myriad of social organizations, including trade unions that provided a lot of the structural and financial support.

It is possible to identify three different moments in the organization of the HSA. The first is the initial organizing of nationally based chapters—*capitulos nacionales*—that actually coordinated the different social organizations on the ground. The second began after 2001, with large mobilizations across the hemisphere, including the march of more than sixty thousand people in the Quebec Summit of the Americas, and a major concentration during the official summit in Miami in 2003 (Saguier 2007; Von Bulow 2009, 2010). This stage also included the organizing of "popular referendums" in 2004, which contributed to gaining the legitimacy and support of the movement in broader sectors of society. The referendums were especially strong in Brazil—ten million people—and in Argentina—2.5 million voters (Berron and Freire 2004). It is no coincidence that the referendums were the largest in the countries with the most active trade-union leadership, as was the case with CUT in Brazil (Latimer 2014) and CTA in Argentina (Rossi 2013). The third and final stage of this process was the political alliance created by the social organizations with the left governments that had come to power throughout the region. The only government support that the HSA gathered before 2003 was the Cuban government (Saguier 2007, 257). With the election of leaders like Lula in Brazil, Chávez in Venezuela, and Kirchner in Argentina, social movements gained leverage for rejecting the FTAA. This three-stage process concluded in November 2005, with a people's summit taking place side by side with the official negotiations in Mar del Plata, where the proposal was rejected due to the lack of support by the MERCOSUR bloc.

The HSA and the campaign against free trade in the ten years from 1995 to 2005 were the most recent pursuits of counter-hegemonic alternatives to neoliberalism that the continent has witnessed in the last thirty years in terms of coalition building. The HSA and the integration of trade unions with other social movements represents what Álvaro García Linera, in his analysis of the counter-neoliberal movements in Bolivia, calls the "multitude form": "a block of collective action that articulates autonomous organized structures of subaltern classes around discursive and symbolic constructions of hegemony, which have the specificity of changing according to the origin of the different segments of this subaltern classes" (2008, 294).

The organizations joined within the HSA did not all have the same idea about development and the alternatives. Despite this, they had a clear focus on combating the hegemonic force of the moment—neoliberalism—and its firmest representation at the time, the Free Trade Area of the Americas. The multitude, in Linera's word, organized a counter-hegemonic movement, without necessarily developing a common perspective on what an alternative should look like. The relevant aspect to highlight here is that lack of common alternative did not impede combating a common enemy. The diverging paths taken by trade unions and social movements in the post-neoliberal

period, and especially regarding the position on center-left governments, is a central issue for debate in the upcoming section.

Left Governments and the Commodities Consensus

The defeat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas in 2005 coincided with a process of anti-neoliberal mobilization across the continent, which in many countries, especially in South America, led to the election of popular left parties into government. These parties had, generally, close ties with social movements, and especially with labor movements, who provided an important force of support in the initial years. The period of left-leaning governments witnessed high economic growth, redistributional policies, strengthening of labor market policies—higher minimum wages, increases in collective bargaining, strengthening of trade unions—and the demise of the Washington Consensus as a legitimate policy framework for the countries in the region.

The economic bonanza that has carried through for nearly a decade in the region is becoming popularly known as the Commodities Consensus (Gudynas 2011; Svampa 2013). This development model implies certain characteristics, differing essentially from the Washington Consensus in the role of the state: the Commodities Consensus reinforces state participation in the production and redistribution of wealth. Among other things, the Commodities Consensus is characterized by an international price bonanza for the primary commodities of the region that allowed for sustained influx of income, leading to an economic boom; implementation of redistributional policies, especially in the form of direct cash transfers to the poorest sectors of society; intense state presence both through collecting taxes but also through national companies participating in production and export of commodities; and dependence on extractive industries—fossil fuels, agribusiness, mining—as the predominant form of production (Burchhardt 2014; Svampa 2013).

The Commodities Consensus differs from the neoliberal period, but it also shares similarities. A central difference is the distribution of resources. While the Washington Consensus represented the retrenchment of the state and the concentration of wealth in few hands, the Commodities Consensus has intended, with relative success, to redistribute part of the wealth created by an unprecedented economic bonanza that places the continent as a main supplier of the growing Asian markets, mostly China. This linkage also explains the growing presence of Chinese investment within the region, in what some have called the “Beijing Consensus” (Slipak 2014). In terms of similarities, the Commodities Consensus is actually based on legislation and investment protocols set during the neoliberal decades, which have not been altered for the time being (Grupo Permanente de Trabajo sobre Alternativas al Desarrollo 2011). This implies a continuation of the development model previously established during neoliberalism, but with state intervention and large redistribution schemes (Burchhardt 2014).

An example of the continuation from neoliberal times is the policies agreed upon at the continental level. In the early 2000s, with the push from the Inter-American Development Bank—an institution pushing the Washington Consensus—South

American countries put forward a proposal to create the Integracion de la Infraestructura Regional Sudamericana (Initiative for Infrastructural Integration in the South-American Region; IIRSA is its acronym in Spanish). IIRSA had the goal, at least officially, of deepening the process of continental integration through building common infrastructure. It included over five hundred different projects, worth over one hundred billion dollars (Tavares de Araujo Jr. 2013). IIRSA was portrayed as the leading project in promoting Latin American development. The project was incorporated by the recently created Union of South American States (UNASUR in Spanish), which was created by the left-leaning governments—with unanimous support from all the countries—to deepen regional integration, autonomous from foreign powers.

The leading structural organization that UNASUR created was the Council for Infrastructure and Planning (COSIPLAN), which continued the proposal of the IIRSA (Tavares de Araujo 2013). Despite the main project being the overcoming of inequalities, COSIPLAN and its predecessor IIRSA are actually central projects for the development of a primary commodities export scheme in the region, with Brazilian and Chinese multinational companies behind it (Turzi 2014). The eight different "corridors" into which South America is divided in the project mean the division of the region according to the needs of the international commodities market, connecting the extraction sites with the ports of the region.

There is then a firm connection between the national government strategies of promoting a commodities-export-based development model and the strategies implemented at the continental level by UNASUR. Furthermore, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), a historic supporter of autonomous industrial development and critic of primary commodities export in the 1970s, has also changed its position, referring today to the "tendency to re-primarization of the economy," and this being an effective "development strategy" for the countries of the region (CEPAL 2011). The ECLAC has jumped on board the Commodities Consensus, promoting a "strategic alliance" between Latin American countries and China (Rosales and Kuwayama 2012).

Since 2010, local conflicts related to this development project began to take place, mainly related to the high socio-environmental impact of the project. Increasingly, local communities have started to challenge the dynamics of the extractive industries and the lack of control from the states on the industries, especially when a state-owned company carries out the exploitation.

The opposition to this model has not taken place at the center of the political agenda —as with the neoliberal model—but rather at the margins, in the territories. This is what Argentine sociologist Maristella Svampa has referred to as the "eco-territorial turn of social struggles" (Svampa 2013). Territorial struggles have expanded throughout Latin America, beginning in the early 2000s but with greater impact since then (Svampa 2008). With the economic slowdown of the last two years, the mobilization and resistance at the local level is moving to the national and continental one.

The trade-union movement, originally reluctant to consider the "environmental"

question, is slowly starting to move in the direction of confronting the model of economic development that is based on fossil fuels and extractive industries. As with the rest of the labor movement throughout the world (Cock 2011, 2014), unions have taken two main positions: a conservative one defending their place within the so-called dirty industries and a progressive, sometimes transformative position that reframes the role of workers in the development model and the need to consider the socio-environmental impacts of economic growth.

This latter position is gaining the upper hand in Latin America, especially with the push of the trade unions that have been the most open to social and environmental movements. This change is pushed by the conflicts at the territorial-community levels, but also due to the slowdown in the performance of the economies in the region, where wages are not growing at the same pace as they did until recently and informality remains a central problematic for a vast section of workers (International Labor Organization 2013). The limitations of the development path become clear not only when wage increases stall but also when the impact of the extractive industries affects the communities workers themselves inhabit (Bacchetta 2013).

The changes in the political dynamics of the continent have altered both the relationships between governments and social movements (including labor) and between social movements themselves. The question of the alliance with progressive forces in government has certainly become a challenge for combative movements that, during the struggles against neoliberal administrations, presented "autonomy" as a central element of the mobilization. The new left administrations, for different reasons, incorporated social and labor movements within their strategies, including placing cadres from these movements into government posts. For many social movements, and especially for progressive trade unions, this relationship can be very problematic. Benjamin Dangl (2010), in his analysis based on social movements—labor not included—has referred to this relationship as "dancing with dynamite," due to the complexities and contradictions it brings to progressive forces.

The Commodities Consensus is creating a confrontation that pushes the trade-union movement either to confront government policies or to defend the extractive industries due to the strategic positioning of unions within dirty industries and to the distributional aspects the model manages to implement. The central question at this point is whether the trade unions, placed as they are today in this consensus, can revive the struggle of the FTAA and re-create the alliance with social movements that made it possible to create a counter-hegemonic space in the region.

Solidarity at a New Crossroads?

The campaign against the FTAA took place in a context of increasing hostility toward neoliberal policies, specifically against free trade. At about the same time the HSA was created, thousands gathered in Seattle to challenge the World Trade Organization, and the World Social Forum became a reality during the process of alliance building against free trade—and even a forum for promoting that campaign (Svampa 2008). The capacity to produce "global" or "continental" events does not come by itself, but it is rather rooted in already existing local struggles. In the case of Latin America, the

challenges to neoliberal policies were already taking place in each city, territory, and country, with important symbolic moments like the "Caracazo" in Venezuela in the early 1990s, or the 2001 social eruption in Argentina.

In the words of Voss and Williams (2012, 353), "Global processes of neoliberalism are being met by local forms of resistance that both challenge and transform the ways in which global processes get interpreted in local places." Precisely this connection between the local struggle and the global (continental) process of resistance to the broader project of neoliberal hegemony is what made the anti-FTAA campaign a successful and legitimate struggle.

Does the current crossroads of the Commodities Consensus provide the opportunity to rebuild such a coalition? There are certainly elements of it that can be identified as positive for such a coalition, while others go against the idea. When comparing both situations, there is a change in what has been deemed the "political opportunity structure" to influence a process. According to Sidney Tarrow's classic definition (1994), social movements can emerge and gain political access to formal politics when there is certain stability and connectivity in the presence of favorable conditions, mainly in the relationship between governments and social movements. The absence of these conditions leads to firmer opportunities for social movement mobilization. As Saguier (2007) states, the lack of such conditions during the negotiations of the FTAA, together with the deep social crisis neoliberalism was producing throughout the region, created a favorable political opportunity structure for mobilization against the FTAA. The role of a clear imperialist target, as in the United States being the central actor behind the project, also contributed to the creation of such a broad alliance.

The structural conditions today make advocating for a continent-wide movement against the Commodities Consensus more complex. There is no single clear hegemonic project—transnational corporations are an integral factor, but they are not so simple to identify in a single form—and the role of foreign powers is more diffuse.[4] Furthermore, the impacts of the development project are mostly felt on the ground in the rural areas, especially in areas of mega-mining projects and oil exploration. The connection with a large urban public, possible in the FTAA opposition mainly through the issue of public services, is a central challenge for the movement.

Within the trade-union movement, the Commodities Consensus has benefitted conservative unions such as the Confederacion General del Trabajo (CGT, General Labour Confederation) in Argentina and Força Sindical in Brazil, both in terms of increasing affiliation and higher wages for those workers. These unions did not actively participate in the struggle against free trade (Anner and Evans 2004) and have not shown willingness to ally with social and environmental movements.

The trade-union movement that is increasingly involved with struggles around the Commodities Consensus's negative impacts is the same that was a leading actor in the campaign against free trade. Unions like CUT in Brazil and CTA in Argentina have begun to question the environmental, social, and geopolitical impact of the commodities model that most governments are running. This has to do with the characteristics of these unions; as social-movement-oriented trade unions, many of their members, and their historic alliances, are from social movements that have been

at the forefront of the struggle against the multinational companies carrying out the extractive industries. In Brazil, CUT's alliance with the Landless Workers' Movement and its own composition of small farmers—nearly half of their members—has led to questioning the model of agribusiness with transgenic soybean production and the leading role multinationals like Monsanto play in it (Constantino 2013). Similarly, CTA's alliance with territorial movements throughout Argentina led to its participation against open-pit mining projects in the Andean region and against Monsanto's fertilizer plant in the province of Córdoba. There are thousands of local struggles throughout the region that include trade-union participation, even at the expense of confrontation with national-level directives.

The fact that the local struggles exist does not directly imply that labor centers will be backing those fights. However, there is a combination of factors that makes the process of trans-sectoral alliance more viable. A significant change today is that the unions at the continental level have been growing discontented with the development model put forward by a bloc originally considered as "progressive." When UNASUR was created, there were high expectations that the bloc could challenge conventional notions of integration through free trade. The role of IIRSA today and the constant concessions to transnational companies have disenchanted significant sectors from labor, complementing the struggles of social movements in the local territories.

As Voss and Williams (2012) assert, the local struggles against hegemonic projects have not gathered enough attention from scholars of social movements, who center their studies on mass mobilizations and international networks. In other words, international high-profile and mass events gather more attention than the local dynamics of those struggles. This is certainly a problem when referring to free trade agreements and their challenges. During the anti-FTAA campaigns, the central attention was placed on the continental structure, more than on the local community-based struggle. As mentioned earlier, the continental struggle over the FTAA was only possible due to fights and alliances that were already taking place locally.

In the case of the Commodities Consensus, the equation is actually reversed. The study of local struggles against extractive industries has received more attention than the continental efforts to combat these policies. This has to do with the fact that "the effects of market [extractive industries, in this case] penetration are often felt most intensely at the local level" (Voss and Williams 2012, 358), and therefore the largest mobilizations have occurred at that level. It also has to do with the absence of concerted efforts at the continental level to combat extractive industries and this development model.

The trade-union movement was unified organizationally across the entire continent during 2008, with the creation of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA). This joined the Christian-based unions—represented previously in the World Confederation of Labor (WCL)—with the unions that had been formerly members of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). (This move was a replica of the global unification of the ICFTU and the WCL, which had taken place earlier in 2006.) The important element for the Americas is that unification created the largest trade-union confederation on the continent, and managed to incorporate trade

unions that had remained independent from international affiliation up until that moment. This was the case of the CTA in Argentina and CUT Colombia. The incorporation of these unions was not only a boost to affiliation, but also influenced the power dynamics within TUCA (Wachendorfer 2007).

Unions that had been active in the struggle against neoliberalism and free trade were now integrated into a single organization, managing to reorient the direction of the main labor movement at the continental level. The participation of these unions increased the impact of CUT Brazil, which became the leading force within TUCA. In terms of the Commodities Consensus struggle, what this has meant is that TUCA can now play a leading role in re-creating a decades-old alliance, especially around the issue of development and sustainability. The leading role played within TUCA by unions historically in alliance with social movements is a valuable contribution to such a struggle. It represents the only regional labor confederation in the world—including the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)—with the capacity to produce massive mobilization around issues that go beyond specific workers' demands. The associational capacity is an asset that is increasingly being incorporated into TUCA's strategies.

Since 2012, TUCA has begun constructing an alliance with social movements and environmental NGOs in trying to present a common position on the development model. The internal dynamics of the confederation make it difficult to create a common unified position, but there have been advances along the way.

The Rio+20 People's Summit, in parallel to the official negotiations, had striking similarities to the formerly used countersummits in the case of the FTAA. There were massive mobilizations of unions in alliance with social movements and environmental and indigenous peoples' organizations. The main aspect addressed throughout the summit was climate change, and specifically the context in which climate problems are exacerbated in Latin America by the dependence on extractive resources.

The Rio+20 Summit also provided the political opportunity to mobilize around an issue in which the center-left governments have not been the most progressive and have actually reproduced policies from the former administrations (Svampa 2008; Zibechi 2010). A product of that mobilization was the launching of the Development Platform of the Americas (PLADA in Spanish), which intends to be a tool for debate and participation from workers in the development process that is taking place in the region (CSA 2014). The PLADA intends to be a "strategic tool for workers and social organizations to overcome structural inequalities in Latin America, with a special focus on the issue of sustainable development" (CSA 2014). The PLADA is not, by any means, a revolutionary tool to combat the Commodities Consensus. However, it represents a remarkable effort by the largest trade-union confederation in the continent to strategize and reposition workers within the development model. In doing so, it can become a valuable tool to reproduce the alliances of a decade ago.

Conclusion: The Question of Strategy

Constructing a global solidarity movement is not solely an issue of political opportunity structures, of associational and structural power (Wright 2000), and of

building “advocacy networks” (Keck and Sikkink 1999); it has a lot to do with strategy. In 2013, the *Socialist Register* published its yearly volume with a suggestive title: “The Question of Strategy.” In this issue, strategies for workers’—and people’s—power throughout the world were discussed in order to challenge capitalism and the attacks on public services (Panitch, Albo, and Chibber 2013).

Relevant to the topic in this essay is the paper presented by Argentine sociologist Atilio Boron (2013), in which he discusses the strategies used by popular movements in Latin America during the struggles against neoliberalism. Contrary to the views of authors like Holloway (2002) and Hardt and Negri (2000), Boron argues that a central element in the strategy of some of the most radical social movements in recent years in Latin America was the organization of political parties from movements “in the streets” (Boron 2013, 246). The most effective cases in changing the political representation presented by Boron are those of Ecuador and Bolivia. Boron is critical of the insurrectional social mobilizations that overthrew governments and then, when governments changed, were “demobilized by the same parties that had asked their support in the elections” (Boron 2013, 247). This, he considers, was the case in Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil, where popular mobilization took place in large numbers during the 1990s and early 2000s, only to be dissipated by the center-left administrations. Similarly, Massimo Modonesi (2014, 169–170), in a broad review of what he deems “passive revolutions,” argues that once in power, center-left governments have actually promoted demobilization of social actors, or in the best cases, worked to control subaltern mobilization of social movements. This is by no means a universal perspective of scholars in the region, but it is certainly a preoccupation for the left forces.

Boron argues that the division between the “social” demands and the “political” ones rests on faulty assumptions. “The demands of a labor union, a peasant federation, a feminist, youth or indigenous organization is never only ‘social’; their struggles are never fought in the pristine scenarios of ‘civil society’” (Boron 2013, 248). This idealization of civil society, in opposition to the political scene, is still problematic today, and has led social movements struggling against extractive industries to the use of strategies that tend to isolate them, rather than develop the link with other movements, including local governments and political parties. South America has become a beacon of hope in recent decades not only for the capacity to mobilize social forces against a hegemonic neoliberal system, but also for implementing strategies that have influenced the political system and led to changes in the dynamics of governing.

Similarly, Panitch (2001) also argues that the changes in class composition presented a necessary change for labor movements in order to become truly representative of current societal dynamics. Panitch calls on labor to “think ambitiously again” (Panitch 2001, 381).

The reflections of Boron, Panitch, and Modonesi are valuable insights into the necessary changes that need to take place today for labor and social movements to regain the capacity of alliance shown during the anti-FTAA days. In the struggle against the extractive industries that are negatively impacting local communities, and placing Latin American countries again in the role of primary commodities provider

for a world market, reorganizing the strategies for struggle is a fundamental step.

Three steps come immediately to mind. First, there is the need to connect the different resistances and insurgencies that are taking place at the local level. This can only be done through continental organizations that have shown the willingness to express local voices. In this way, the TUCA can potentially be a central player. Second, unions need to become more aggressive in their criticism of the current development model. The ITUC motto "there are no jobs on a dead planet" is a starter, but not a defining element for a strategy. The trade-union movement that has historical links with social movements and community organizations is better positioned to take up the challenge. Increasingly, unions like CUT and CTA are moving in this direction. Third, a strategy needs to incorporate the politicization of the issue. It is not enough to reject and oppose large-scale extractive projects. The political system needs to be engaged in the struggle. The proliferation of local referendums (Svampa 2008) is a positive sign in that direction. A following discussion should include breaking the subaltern mobilization into a more autonomous path.

However, further engagement needs to take place at the continental level. If UNASUR is presented as an alternative form of continental integration—i.e., different from "free trade"–oriented agreements—then it needs to be challenged to actually do such. The presentation of the PLADA platform by TUCA to UNASUR, and to the center-left governments that have led the process of regional integration, certainly contributes to that engagement. The Rio+20 Summit and the Lima 2014 Conference of the Parties represented moments for labor, social movements, and environmental organizations to re-create those alliances that were successful in the past. Further engagement, however, is needed to move beyond eventual summits.

The struggle for a more sustainable development model includes a review of the role of unions in sustaining the current Commodities Consensus. This implies, like in the 1990s at the peak of neoliberalism, a deep discussion needs to take place on what unions are, whom they represent, and what their role can be in the near future.

Bringing back to the core the so-called "blue-green alliance" (Foster 2010) that mobilized against the World Trade Organization in the late 1990s in Latin America is less about the alliance of labor with environmental NGOs and more so about the relationship with territorial organizations that are struggling against the current development model on the ground and that were a genuine factor in the struggle against neoliberal administrations. The capacity of both sides to rejoin will also depend on the relationship they can establish with governments, at the local and national levels. The agendas of popular mobilization can only maintain a genuine, vibrant, insurrectional character if they remain autonomous from governments but at the same time engage them as a necessary actor in changing realities. The fear of "the political" needs to be overcome, especially for the social and environmental movements that have been at the forefront of the struggle against the Commodities Consensus.

The re-creation of the alliance with the trade-union movement can be a foundational factor in politicizing the struggles, demanding structural transformations from those same governments that claim a "change of times" (Svampa 2008), and taking them up

on their rhetoric.

CHAPTER 5

It Takes More Than a Village: A Case Study of Worker Solidarity in Bangladesh

Timothy Ryan

The title of Hillary Clinton's book about raising children, *It Takes a Village*, speaks to the need for collective action in society to not only raise decent, conscientious citizens but also to solve problems and address injustices that individuals cannot accomplish by themselves. The title of this chapter, as a case study of workers improving their own lives in the Bangladesh garment industry, implies that in a global economy, or as Marshall McLuhan put it as far back as the 1960s, the "global village," local events are the impetus for action. However, it is hard to accomplish sustainable change and lasting social justice on a small scale without engaging the larger world. This is particularly true of the garment industry, whose globe-girdling supply-chain structure connects exploited workers in garment factories in developing countries to the shoulders, arms, hips, and feet of consumers in both developing and developed countries.

In this chapter, I take some pages from practical experience and sociological models to explain how the globalized economy creates exploitation, how both employers and workers respond to this economic structure, and how events can pressure employers to change their sourcing practices and create openings and catalysts that help workers empower themselves. I will also discuss the opportunities for small groups of mostly women workers from the "village" of, say, a Bangladeshi garment factory workforce of five hundred, to understand and utilize tools—such as campaigns and trade law pressure—available to them in the "global village" to change their lives.

Ultimately, establishing worker power and compelling engagement with an employer, government, trade organization, or export processing zone (EPZ) authority are about using all the tools at one's disposal to *change behavior*. In my experience, changing hearts, minds, and attitudes can take decades—and sometimes it never happens—but the first step into those hearts and minds is compelling behavioral change, and using the hard realities of a globalized economy can be a start.

The Human Face of Neoliberal Globalization

In November 2012, the Tazreen Fashions factory went up in flames in the Ashulia district outside Dhaka, Bangladesh; 112 workers died, many of them leaping from the burning building in an attempt to escape. Here is just one story,[1] indicative of so many others of workers caught in the Tazreen fire tragedy:

> Nasima, 25, cannot breathe well nor see clearly. She speaks softly, too weak to raise her voice. Nasima escaped the November 24, 2012, Tazreen Fashions garment factory fire in

> Bangladesh with her life, but her injuries from the disaster are so extensive, she can no longer support herself and her family. “I don’t have the strength to work in the garment factories anymore,” she says. “I am always worried about my family’s future. How will I survive? Day by day my situation is getting worse,” she said, weeping.
>
> She sold all the possessions she had left in her home village to pay for her medical expenses, but cannot afford the CAT scan her doctors recommend.
>
> Regarding the day of the Tazreen factory fire, Nasima said, “Even after the fire alarm, I was warned by other workers that if I leave, I will be terminated.” With two small children at home, Nasima said, “I wanted to go out. But the factory manager and the production manager had forbidden me to do that. They said nothing was happening.”
>
> She left her workstation and made it to the second floor. “I asked others to somehow let me go out of the building. I was lifted to the shoulder of a mechanic and thrown to the roof of the nearby building.”
>
> Following the Tazreen disaster, Nasima received $320 and a little food from two private organizations. She says she received a call from the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturing and Exporting Association (BGMEA) regarding compensation, but the employer group later refused to give her money, saying she would get it in the future if it were available. A year later, Nasima has received nothing.
>
> Nasima hopes for compensation from the employers and the government—enough to enable her to survive if she can never return to work. “I am in this condition while doing their work,” she said. Nasima wants her children to get education so they will not struggle to survive. She wants to get well soon and go back to work. (Connell 2013)

Since the Tazreen blaze, the Solidarity Center’s Dhaka office has documented seventy fire-related incidents[2] (including false alarms) in which at least fifty people have died and more than nine hundred women and men have suffered injuries.

As of this writing (June 2015), the most recent deadly event occurred on March 12, 2015, at the Sena Kalyan Sangstha Mongla Cement Factory in Mongla, Bagerhat, Bangladesh, where seven were killed and at least fifty injured.[3] This was, however, due to the collapse of a partially completed roof; the most recent fire-related incident occurred on January 31, 2015, at the Nasim Plaza Plastic Factory in Mirpur, Dhaka. The factory caught fire as several gas cylinders exploded on the ground floor, and the fire spread to the entire building immediately around 5:25 p.m. Thirteen deaths were reported, but the bodies were beyond recognition and could not be identified. An unknown number of workers suffered severe burn injuries.[4]

Just five short months after the Tazreen fire, the Rana Plaza collapsed, housing five different garment factories, killing almost twelve hundred mainly young women garment workers and injuring twenty-five hundred others. The Tazreen fire and the Rana Plaza catastrophe were wake-up calls for the international garment industry, Western buyers, Bangladesh factory owners, and the Bangladesh government.[5]

Workers at Rana Plaza saw cracks in the building structure the day before the terrible collapse—and while a number of businesses in the building closed for safety reasons the next day, garment workers were threatened with firing or lost wages if they did not go back to the sewing floor. If they, and the workers victimized at Tazreen, had a union on that morning and the collective power to refuse to work, they would likely be alive today.

But Bangladeshi workers seeking to organize their own independent unions are starting from a very different place than many of their comrades in other parts of the world.

The genesis of the labor movement in South Asia comes partly from horrific conditions under British imperialism, but also from the broader anticolonial national liberation movement, which saw mobilization of labor as a powerful tool to aid the cause, beginning in the period 1918–1923. The Indian National Congress logically needed to inspire a militant workers' contribution to the struggle, and so the Indian National Trade Union Congress was born and officially formed an alliance with the Indian National Congress at independence in 1947. Subsequent to independence for India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in 1947–1948, this model of trade-union organization as a front for a political movement (which evolved into political parties) persisted and morphed. As party politics fragmented into various factions, particularly on the left, so did the trade-union movement. At Partition in 1947, East and West Pakistan formed as a separate country from India, and in 1971, East Pakistan seceded to become Bangladesh.

This phenomenon really took on different hues in each South Asian country. Both India and Nepal initially had the strongest links between parties such as the Congress Party and various Communist Party factions, but over time these links have weakened somewhat. Today, in Nepal, for example, while the Nepal Trade Union Congress still nominally allies itself with the Nepali Congress Party, and the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions is still connected to the Unified Marxist-Leninist Party, they exhibit increased degrees of independence and represent the interests of their members in a very concrete fashion. Both of these federations also work together on some common issues facing workers, such as pressing for a social security and unemployment insurance system. In Pakistan, the Pakistan Workers Federation, whose unions represent 60 percent of the formal sector, have absolutely no ties to any political party.

Unfortunately, by contrast, Bangladesh inherited the most virulent and deep-rooted tradition of political parties using unions primarily as foot soldiers for political gain instead of representing workers' interests, and it is now the epitome of this phenomenon in South Asia. Since the two leading political parties, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Awami League, are locked in perpetual conflict, so are their "trade union" fronts. The only unions really organizing in Bangladesh today are independent organizations and one or two with only weak ties to any existing political parties.

So, for the last twenty years, as the garment industry in Bangladesh developed and grew to become the second largest in the world—behind only China's—exporting $23.5 billion worth of garments in 2013 (Finance Express Report 2014), whatever "unions" existed in the industry mainly served the interests of political parties and employers, not workers. Dozens of garment manufacturers are members of the two dominant political parties, which have their own "trade union" fronts. Until the beginning of 2013, there were only about two dozen unions actually active in promoting their members' interests.[6] This, out of a total of four to five thousand

workplaces. In 2011 and 2012, exactly one new garment-sector union was registered by the government *each year*.

Starting in 2013, however, and accelerating up through June 23, 2015, 285 new unions were organized and registered, with another twelve awaiting registration as of May 15, 2015.[7] Unlike the vast majority of garment unions already in existence, the majority of the new unions are independent organizations[8] with no ties to political parties. That said, there are only a few new unions being registered that are neither political fronts nor yellow unions put together by employers.

Factors Improving the Union Organizing Situation

So what are the factors that began to change this situation after twenty years of stagnation?

I have identified at least four basic tools that, taken in concert, have begun to improve the trade-union organizing picture in Bangladesh. These four tools—technical training, external leverage, opportunism, and presence—are transferable to other countries and circumstances; the situation in each country will require modification and adaptation. But I have seen over the last twenty-five years of supporting workers organizing their unions in Asia that the four tools are essential for rank-and-file workers to have a significant impact and lasting success in creating their own autonomous organizations and empowering themselves.

Technical Training

While every trade union needs to educate its members about their rights (especially those newly organized) and their elected shop stewards and officers about a variety of technical issues—organizing, collective bargaining, grievance procedures, union administration, political advocacy—various countries are starting from extremely different entry points. In Bangladesh, the lack of education, nonrepresentative trade unions (that is, political fronts instead of militant ideological bases),[9] women's inequality, and political repression (including intermittent military juntas) over decades complicate the education and training of the predominantly young, female workforce in the Bangladeshi garment industry. Indeed, the labor movement is starting from a very basic level.

In this context, I think it is useful to adapt psychologist Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" model into a "Hierarchy of Trade-Union Development" to work with unions to develop their organizations from the ground up. Simply put, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a recognition in people that basic needs such as physiological well-being, safety, and relationships (love and esteem) have to be established and satisfied before an individual can move up to the "self-actualization" dependent on the security of the previous needs being satisfied.

In trade-union terms, this means that while the opportunity—through the emergence of a dominant ideology or charismatic leader—may exist in certain historical situations, to develop a sustainable trade-union movement or set of unions or federations by the autocratic imposition of this power from the top simply does not work in my experience.

To coincide with Maslow's pyramid hierarchy, we can think of basic trade-union principles and rights as a basis by which workers, once they absorb these foundations, can begin to think and act in more self-interested and sophisticated ways. Once workers are motivated and feel they have enough political space to actually organize, they need organizing training. Once they have organized a union, they need training in how to run that organization and motivate members. Once they begin running the union with some element of member support, organization, and planning, they need to establish relationships with management and the government. With those relationships comes the opportunity to negotiate and bargain with employers, and beyond that, develop advocacy with the government on policies that affect workers and their families.

In my experience working with unions throughout Asia, it is fairly impossible to skip or jumble these steps and still become an effective, democratic organization. The training starts with rank-and-file workers, but through a graduated series of this technical assistance, the rank-and-file begin to develop as leaders. As those leaders take on more responsibility, the cycle continues at the grassroots level so that eventually all of these different training programs are happening simultaneously, graduating one set of activists into higher and higher skill levels and responsibilities. Once organizations get a seat at the table, they have to have the wherewithal to engage constructively and strategically. And how do they get that seat at the table? It comes through their own organization, militancy, and collective voice. But it is through connecting with the larger global village of labor rights activists that their voice can be magnified.

External Leverage

It was really only after an exposé in *Harper's Magazine* during the Summer Olympics in 1992 highlighted Nike's abuse of workers in Indonesia (Ballinger and Ryan 1992) that the spotlight of news and campaigns really began to impact the global garment and footwear supply chain. More exposés began to appear in print and broadcast media. Suddenly big American and European brands began developing "codes of conduct," supposedly used by their suppliers to adhere to internationally recognized labor standards and individual countries' labor laws. These codes were used as the basis for "corporate social responsibility" auditing schemes that, while they cost the brands millions of dollars, produced nothing but public relations exercises and clearly, as evidenced by the disasters in Pakistan and Bangladesh, have had no impact on protecting either workers' rights or their lives.[10] But while consumer awareness and campaigns are important to focusing attention by consumers on the need for change, they have been shown to be insufficient in and of themselves to impact brands, employers, and governments in a long-term, sustainable manner.[11]

Another instrument of external leverage in the United States became available in 1984, and the AFL-CIO, International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF),[12] and other activists have since used it to put pressure on businesses and governments that oppressed workers and violated their rights. This is the trade law called the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Simply put, goods manufactured in

developing countries that are part of the GSP program are eligible to enter the United States at reduced tariff and duty levels, provided the country meets a variety of conditions, some of which are internationally recognized core labor standards.[13]

The GSP law is a blunt instrument; it covers only certain types of goods (garments under the US law are excluded) and generally is used as an all-or-nothing proposition —that is, either benefits are continued, withdrawn, or suspended on all goods covered under the law. It is extremely rare that the US Trade Representative (USTR) makes a decision to suspend GSP benefits, and decisions on GSP petition reviews or suspension are routinely filtered through other geopolitical considerations.[14] However, once a petition is accepted for review, targeted governments and businesses feel the opprobrium of this public spotlight, and because the petition review can take place over a period of years, this process (in some circumstances) helps maintain open space for workers and activists to advance a labor rights agenda.

Over the years the AFL-CIO has filed multiple petitions against Bangladesh, the first in 1991 focused on child labor in the garment industry. Partly in response to that petition, as well as a program organized by the Asian-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI)[15] and the International Labour Organization (ILO), approximately twenty thousand child laborers were removed from the Bangladesh garment industry. This initiative was also the catalyst for the formation of the Bangladesh Independent Garment Workers Union Federation (BIGUF), with constitutionally mandated places of authority for women leaders. While some child labor still remains in the industry, it is nowhere near the systemic levels it was in the early 1990s.

The latest AFL-CIO petition was filed against Bangladesh in 2007, and for a few years, up to 2010, some progress was made: Laws were passed covering the country's EPZs in 2004 and 2010 to provide for limited freedom of association, and workers elected their own workers' welfare associations (WWAs) in approximately 75 percent of facilities. In the shrimp and seafood sectors, workers were able to organize and register six unions with the government's Joint Directorate of Labor, a legal requirement. However, there was no progress in the garment industry. And since 2010, backsliding by the employers and government meant the busting of the unions in the seafood sector and the marginalization of the WWAs, with routine harassment, intimidation, and retribution against leaders.

Then came the Tazreen and Rana Plaza disasters. Suddenly the terms of the debate changed, and the combination of renewed, intense outside campaign and consumer awareness, as well as pressure by organizations such as the ILRF, the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC),[16] and the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC)[17] in Europe all but guaranteed that the US government could not simply handle this GSP case as business as usual. Observers pointed out that if no action were to be taken against the Bangladesh government, even under these most dire of circumstances, then the GSP "threat" would be deemed wholly useless in pressuring other countries anywhere in the world to address their labor violations.

As a result, in June 2013, the USTR announced the suspension of GSP benefits to Bangladesh and set forth a comprehensive set of sixteen conditions that had to be accomplished for Bangladesh to renew its GSP status. These conditions included

increasing the number of labor, building, and fire inspectors; establishing higher sanctions for violations; creating a publicly accessible database of garment factories on labor, fire, and building standards and violations; enacting meaningful labor law reform; expeditiously registering unions; dropping criminal charges against NGO activists; conducting a truly transparent investigation into the April 2012 murder of union organizer Aminul Islam; making a commitment to bring the EPZs into conformity with international standards and labor law in the rest of the country (and in the meantime ensure real freedom of association for the existing WWAs); ensuring freedom of association in the shrimp and seafood sector; and honoring a commitment to serious alternative dispute resolution, among others.

When the US government suspended Bangladesh's trade benefits under its GSP program for the country's poor labor record, it was a strong signal that Bangladesh also could not keep doing business as usual. Working conditions, safety standards, and respect for worker rights in Bangladesh are and have been among the lowest in South and Southeast Asia for decades, and that had to change.

Suddenly a very thoughtful but moribund plan that had been constructed by the WRC, the ILRF, and the CCC—with some input from various other labor activist organizations and an eventual, crucial commitment from the American company Phillips-Van Heusen—took on a new agency and urgency: the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh.[18]

The resulting Bangladesh Building and Fire Safety Accord is the most substantial and far-reaching commitment to worker rights and safety by mostly European clothing brands and retailers (but with a few American brands and retailers) in the history of any country's garment industry. The Accord—a binding agreement between the global unions IndustriALL and Union Network International and over two hundred signatory international apparel companies—identifies and requires that the apparel companies' estimated more than eighteen hundred supplier factories in Bangladesh remedy and prevent safety hazards, as well as educate and empower workers to play a proactive role in this process. It also serves as a channel of communication between unions on the ground, international worker rights organizations, and the brands to resolve problems at the factory level.

Unlike voluntary social responsibility schemes and codes of conduct, the Accord establishes a role for workers and their representatives in the identification, remediation, and prevention of safety hazards and places a binding obligation on international brands and retailers to ensure that necessary remedial and preventative measures are fully implemented and sustained by factory owners. In contrast to "social auditing" and "certification" systems that the garment industry has relied upon for years—for public relations purposes rather than for protecting the lives and health of workers—this new mechanism is binding upon the signatories.

Workers are the best monitors of conditions in their factories because they are on the shop floor every day, as opposed to auditors hired by companies—and this is finally acknowledged.[19] Workers in the Rana Plaza factories literally saw the structural cracks spread across walls the day before the building fell. They did not want to return to the building, and many have told the Solidarity Center that they were threatened

with the loss of their meager wages or their jobs if they did not go back to their machines. If they had a union, they could have had the strength to say no to being forced into a death trap. Nasima's story from the Tazreen disaster just reinforces this potential truth for workers to seize upon.

These truths lead me to the third tool: opportunism.

Opportunism

By using this term, I mean it in the best possible sense of the word. It means not being caught or stuck in old paradigms and strategies of organizing or mobilizing workers. It also means being able to work with others outside one's union committee in a specific factory struggling against powerful employers and to employ those tools that come from outside your "village" to support a specific, local change. It can also be the symbol and wave of a broader change in society, producing a Bangladeshi and international version of the community coalition building such as that which took place during labor's organizing growth in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century. In Bangladesh's highly factionalized political landscape, this is really difficult, but is not impossible.

The opportunism factor is extremely important and highly unpredictable, but as we can see with the Bangladesh Building and Fire Safety Accord (and the tool of "presence" discussed below), if strategizing and problem solving can coordinate and keep pace with developments on the ground, and if other tools are in place, the impact of addressing specific tragic events like the fires and building collapses can help workers maximize the situation to unionize in ways no one could have predicted without these events.

Despite the unique confluence of these factors, despite hefty promises and comprehensive "action plans" from manufacturers and the government, the effort to improve fire and building safety in the Bangladesh garment industry, with the ultimate goal of organizing workers (which is decidedly *not* part of the government of Bangladesh's action plans, hence the "opportunism" aspect of this struggle), will require commitment by all parties, including the union activists in the community to try to organize and workers who risk their lives every day just by going to work. This is due to a variety of factors, including the actual physical infrastructure of the garment industry (thousands of factories and buildings that do not meet building and fire safety codes), the structure of the economy (which encourages business decisions to be made on short-term considerations), the susceptibility to political interference by the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), a feeble labor and building inspectorate system, and extremely weak law enforcement. Change is also politically difficult: 85 percent of Bangladesh's foreign exchange comes from this one industry, and garment manufacturers and their families permeate the parliament and the political power structure.

However, this opening in terms of fire and building safety affords Bangladesh workers a new opportunity to organize. While fire and building safety is an imperative after the recent incidents, the key goal is to open the window for workers to organize —around safety and other important issues such as a living wage.

Which leads to the last important tool: presence.

Presence

Critical to the current growth in Bangladesh's labor movement has been the active, sustained, and trusted presence on the ground of the international labor movement, which is what the AFL-CIO and the Solidarity Center have provided for decades.

A ground presence equals continuity. Continuity is essential for building relationships and to understanding the deep currents of any country's politics, culture, labor history, personalities, and future. The AFL-CIO, through the Solidarity Center, has decades of experience establishing trust, relationships, and protection for and with independent union activists in Bangladesh. This long-term commitment has yielded a long-term perspective on the development of the Bangladeshi labor movement and a knowledge of which organizations are political appendages and which are real grassroots organizations. No other international organization from Europe, for example, has had this track record or experience.[20]

In the early 1990s, the Solidarity Center's predecessor organization, AAFLI, assisted in the formation of the cornerstone of the modern union movement in the garment industry, the BIGUF, which was the first union in Bangladesh that stipulated in its constitution that women must have a leadership role in the union (the first and, so far, only union in the country to have done so).[21] This presence is important also because when other conditions helped create the momentum for change, an organization with a long-term perspective and experience is well positioned to help its partners take advantage of the situation immediately, rather than encounter a steep learning curve and lose ground due to no track record or reputation of cooperation.

As one adage has it, familiarity breeds contempt. It also, however, breeds relationships. In the former category in the garment sector in Bangladesh, there are fifty-two labor "federations," but the vast majority are organizations in name only or are appendages of political parties that have never represented workers' interests. In the wake of the Rana Plaza collapse and the GSP suspension—and the space these events created—a handful of independent unions actually started organizing, while dozens of other "union" organizations did nothing and continue to do nothing. Presence and experience on the ground mean an organization knows immediately which unions deserve support and which are not serious about either organizing or real trade-union work.

What to do with these tools? It is important to understand how both brands and governments react to attacks on their basic operating principles of exploitation and impunity. These are powerful motivators and elicit powerful responses in return. They are responses that can be used against them and on behalf of workers.

Over the years I have found that companies and governments, when confronted with the necessity to change their sourcing and market behavior, react with something approaching, absurdly, a perception of an existential threat. This threat creates a conflation of politics and socioeconomics that can be used to understand the brands', companies', and government's psychology and behavior. It also provides workers opportunities to better their circumstances and change the basic debate of

globalization. And I found the model, curiously enough, in the work of a Swiss sociologist.

A Guide to Interpreting Trade Relations Behavior in the Global Economy

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a Swiss American sociologist, authored a book in 1969 called *On Death and Dying*, which formulated the "Five Stages of Grief" as a social/psychological construct of the way a person deals with his or her own death. I first read the book in the 1970s, thought it interesting, then did not think much about it after that. Apparently it stuck with me, however, because as I was doing labor advocacy work twenty years later in South Asia, I was struck by seeing this theory applied to a completely different social arena: trade relations behavior in the global economy.

While Kübler-Ross's original theory applies to individuals' feelings, relationships, and how they approach death, it is remarkably adaptable when it comes to explaining and understanding governments' and businesses' existential fear of adapting and changing when a threat to their business model and economic behavior in a globalized context arises.

I observed this sequence first as I was working with anti-child-labor groups in India and Pakistan in the early 1990s, and see it today talking to governments, employers, multinational corporations, and brands who are subject to US trade law restrictions because of their egregious violations of worker rights. And interestingly enough, it works across cultures and countries. When confronted with a challenge to eliminate child labor, address human trafficking, or cease attacks and violations on worker rights, governments and businesses react in the remarkably same pattern, country after country. I have found this to be true in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Georgia, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Bangladesh. Labor and human rights advocates can and should use this psychological tool to understand and anticipate their adversaries and move their own agenda forward.

The five stages, as Kübler-Ross defined them, are denial, rage, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

First, *denial*. Child labor in Pakistan and India—pervasive in handicrafts, brick kilns, carpets, construction, mining, services, agriculture, and the list goes on—does not exist. Repression of worker rights in Bangladesh's garment factories? Not a problem because workers do not want unions, and worker leaders are not fired. Trafficking of Burmese migrant workers into the seafood industry in Thailand? It is not happening. In Kübler-Ross's words, "This can't be happening, not to me." This represents, in some cases, a sense of blind exceptionalism by the industries and government, who feel they are actually doing nothing wrong within their political and cultural context. Other cases are simply a calculation from the beginning to stonewall any efforts to address and improve the situation.

I encountered one of the most remarkable examples of this first stage recently in the Republic of Georgia, the small country in the Caucasus that won independence after

the breakup of the Soviet Union. The country's Rose Revolution in 2004 brought Mikheil Saakashvili to power in a move against old Soviet apparatchiks. The Rose Revolution ushered in a new government that cast its eyes to Europe and the United States for democratic inspiration, including both political and economic reform. The economy grew robustly in 2006–2007 but suffered during Georgia's conflict with Russia and the global economic crisis beginning in 2008. Over the last seven years, the government has attempted to increase investment, reduce regulatory requirements, and rein in corruption, while also ostensibly pursuing political democracy.

But the bloom came off the rose. Saakashvili's government revealed itself as quasi-libertarian and looked to model itself both politically and economically after Singapore, which is a one-party state with no political opposition and no independent civil society organizations to balance power and, in its own Southeast Asian paradox, is a state that actually controls huge aspects of the economy. Sixty percent of housing, for example, is owned by the Singaporean government, which also controls the only legal trade-union federation.

In 2011, when the Georgian government's public statements extolled the United States as a model, it was looking to systematically strip basic and recently gained democratic rights from working men and women. Despite or perhaps because of the rhetoric of free-market reform, Georgia was using extreme neoliberal capitalism as an adjunct to a repressive Soviet-style system to strip workers of freedom of association.

The pro-Western, capitalist/libertarian government attacked and tried to dismember the only labor movement in the former Soviet Union that really tried to reform itself from the inside on democratic, representative, and independent principles. In response and to assist the Georgian Trade Union Confederation, the AFL-CIO filed a GSP petition with the USTR to remove preferential tariff benefits from Georgia. The case of Georgia was unique because it was not business by and large attacking freedom of association; it was the ostensibly "liberal" pro-European government.

In meeting after meeting, the Georgian government refused, in the face of all objective logic and demonstrable proof, to admit that its thuggish attacks on unions and its new draconian labor law violated all ILO standards. Even the ILO called them on it. This was one of the most severe cases of denial I had ever seen, and it went on for years.

The problem with denial is that stubborn facts get in the way. In the case of the recent factory fires in Pakistan and Bangladesh, which killed hundreds, and the nearly twelve hundred workers who died in the building collapse in Dhaka, these facts cannot be ignored or denied away.

When people are in denial, they are stuck. They cannot face facts, and they cannot admit they are wrong. Believe me, plenty of lobbying firms the Georgians hired to take their side advised them that denial was not an option. So what is next?

Second stage, *rage*. From Kübler-Ross: "Why me? It's not fair!" "How can this happen to me?" "Who is to blame?"

In the case of raising issues of trade law and requirements for decent labor standards for exports to enter the United States and Europe, externalizing this rage is common and pervasive: How dare you attack us for exploiting and abusing our children and

workers? You are exposing an unfortunate underside of our economy and culture that we do not want to admit to and do not want to confront. For years, Uzbekistan has been under attack as one of the most egregious violators of human rights, especially child and forced labor, because of its annual cotton harvest. Every September, the government and its cotton-based economy—controlled personally by President Islam Karimov and his family—force hundreds of thousands of its teachers, students, and children into the fields to pick the cotton that props up not only the dictatorial regime but also Karimov's family. Along with the Georgians, the Uzbek government has been particularly vociferous in its anger toward its own country's human rights defenders and international labor and human rights organizations that have exposed these abuses.

In the case of Bangladesh: How dare the West criticize our lowest possible labor and wage standards in the region, which are killing workers but comprise the backbone of our economy?

The externalization, in my experience, is misplaced. The local labor and human rights activists in any country are the first to sound the alarm, who sacrifice on the front line, and who are in the struggle for the long haul. International attention and use of trade law is one of the tools that all of these organizations, working together, can use to improve the situation.

The rage is understandable: consider who is really profiting off low wages and lower standards. In the garment trade, first and foremost, it is the US and European brands and retailers who source from Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, and Indonesia. But the rage really comes from the host country governments and companies who bend to the brands' bidding. Their rage is partially directed at the brands that pay only the rock-bottom per-unit cost, which squeezes local suppliers and governments to lower wages and standards, and governments to ignore their own labor laws. But they are constrained from venting that rage by their business relationships, so they take it out on their own citizens and international human and labor rights groups who point out inconvenient truths. Even as pressure mounted on Bangladesh in the past few years, legal attacks on and violence against trade-union organizers and workers did not abate; they increased.[22]

Third stage, *bargaining*. When facing death, this becomes an aspiration, sometimes merely wishful: "I'll do anything for a few more years." In the globalized economy, it means, okay, to keep doing business, we know we have to engage in the debate in some way. Stall. Obfuscate. Buy time.

The first response from both brands and local companies and governments is not surprising: public relations! We want to stay in the denial stage by not changing the way we do business, but we will bargain for a better public image with consumers and importing countries to keep from changing what we are actually doing. This stage has been going on for more than twenty years.

The most obvious examples of this behavior were first the development, in the early 1990s, of "corporate codes of conduct" and, subsequently, "social auditing." The thinking? We know what we are doing is wrong, but we have to find a way to whitewash it. In Bangladesh it is, "We realize we have put all our eggs in one basket since 85 percent of our foreign exchange is generated on the backs of low-wage

women workers. Now let us figure out how to spin this as a good thing!"

The idea ultimately is to save market share and stave off trade sanctions without really changing how business is done.

But it is all bargaining. In reality, in my experience dealing with governments and employers in South and Southeast Asia, it has never gotten beyond the facade of the bargaining stage. If they really want to bargain in good faith, they have to get through the next stage.

Stage number four, *depression*: "Why bother with anything?" "I'm going to die soon, so what's the point?"

From the brands' perspective, it is tempting to give up on a problem sourcing from various countries and suppliers and simply move orders elsewhere to avoid reputational risk, making at once a decision to give up on one situation and through cold, calculating business decisions abandon what are sometimes long-term business partners.

Which produces a depressive effect, both economically and psychologically, on the affected country's industry. A key element of the discussion in Bangladesh in this context is the use of the same levers and pressures by international labor activists, Bangladeshi companies, and governments to impel the brands *not* to give up on Bangladesh and to stay and fix the problems they helped create. Some Bangladeshi garment manufacturers have said that if the industry leaves, or they have to change their business model too much, they'll simply close down and quit the industry, with the effect of throwing millions of workers out on the street.

For governments, this analogy is a bookend with their first, vociferous denials. The depression comes in being caught out in a lie, exposed for not protecting their own workers, and receiving severe damage to their reputation in a global political and economic context. There is a real fear that, in fact, not because of what workers and labor activists are striving for, but because of the denial and rage and refusal to address the situation, governments really will lose this industry.

The most difficult stage of course for brands, businesses, and governments is *acceptance*: "It's going to be okay." "I can't fight it; I may as well prepare for it."

Psychologically, in death, you have surrender. In surrender to death, there is peace. The irony in applying this formulation to the garment industry in Bangladesh is that in surrender, there is life. In this analogy, the brands, the manufacturers, and the government say, "I have to change my business model. I have to do things I do not want to do. But sometimes, I will change in a significant and substantive way because I have to."

However, this is where governments, local and multinational suppliers, and brands are parting company.

I have never seen a government get to this moment in a serious way and sustain it. There are some partial advances: India after decades adopted new laws on child labor, forced labor, and trafficking but has yet to really implement them in a comprehensive way. There has been a paradigm shift in terms of rhetoric, at least, over the past twenty years regarding the rights of migrant workers in Asia and (now beginning) in the Middle East. This moment, with the advent of the Bangladesh Accord, the GSP action

plan, the continued international pressure on the brands, the increased engagement of the European Union in examining their own GSP benefit scheme with the garment industry, the brands' own pressure on Bangladesh companies, and the technical ability to assist workers establish a beachhead of density in the garment industry, represents perhaps a first time when all these tools coming together could produce something resembling grudging and possibly sustained acceptance.

While the government of Bangladesh may be compelled by the levers and tools to reach acceptance, where does that leave the local and multinational companies and the brands? Acceptance looks very different to them. And the mobility of the brands and multinational suppliers means that they can effectively avoid acceptance, as they have, for decades.

Acceptance for the local companies and the government means something else because it can directly impact on equitable socioeconomic development and growing the national economy, which has inherent multiplier effects.

The unions organizing in Bangladesh today have used the political space created by the controversy, the public shaming, the trade pressure itself, the government's and brands' reactions, to push forward an active and aggressive organizing agenda. They know, and the international organizations working with them know, that this space is not going to be there forever. In fact, since the beginning of 2015, there have been signs that the Bangladesh government's willingness to register new unions is slowing down. And beyond registration, unions have to turn their organizing into action for their members in the form of collective bargaining, which requires the employers to be more engaged.

The Five Stages of Grief talk about dying: but what the brands and governments do not understand by buying into this mindset is that we are talking about getting to living, producing, and prospering, not dying. Despite all the years of failure before, the confluence of events and tools may for the first time induce a change that constitutes an acceptance of how to manage this industry going forward. But workers have to continue to organize in the space they have in order to build power to make that a reality.

The evolving situation in Bangladesh also may provide the opportunity to critique the global garment supply chain into other countries and other supply chains. In the three years that Myanmar (Burma) has begun to reform its political and economic systems, allowing freedom of association for the first time in fifty years, approximately seventeen hundred unions have been organized and registered in the agriculture, garment, woodworking, light manufacturing, university faculty, and railroad sectors, among others. In conversations with government officials, employers, civil society organizations, and unions, I have stressed that there is an opportunity for Burma to avoid Bangladesh's fate and challenge the brands and manufacturers to do better than its next-door neighbor.[23] This conversation is true not only for an emerging country like Burma, but also for other countries that are already more integrated into the global supply chains in products like seafood, electronics, and services.

Conclusion

The Bangladeshis have a unique moment in history to create a new business paradigm that respects and protects workers. The current confluence of events and momentum could propel real, substantive improvements in factory safety. There has never been the space for workers to organize like this in the garment industry's history in the country. It is the country's and the industry's next best chance to do the right thing. If they do not, history shows that it will be not only Bangladeshi garment workers who pay the price for a historic failure, but also the Bangladeshi economy and millions of other workers. With workers finally able to organize and begin to use their power for bargaining, there is a chance for sustainable economic development and a continued improvement in the Bangladeshi population's economic growth and development.

The millions of women garment workers toiling away in the "village" sweatshops of Bangladesh are beginning to see a ray of light that can substantially, and in a sustainable way, improve their working conditions and help them empower themselves economically and politically. They are key to this change, but, as has been shown in campaign after campaign, time and again, they cannot do it alone. No amount of outside leverage or rhetoric or trade law or campaign tools can do this for workers absent their own agency. Bangladesh today may be pointing in a direction where all the villagers and their supporters globally can make the changes they want to see in the world, taking advantage of the tools at their disposal and the support from around the world.

The question is whether the Bangladesh government, companies, multinational suppliers, and brands will accept it.

CHAPTER 6

Building Global Labor Solidarity Today: Learning from the KMU of the Philippines[1]

Kim Scipes

As new labor movements are currently emerging across the Global South, activists and leaders in these labor movements are seeking information from workers and unions around the world. It is exciting to see global labor solidarity develop.[2] While personnel and resources might be in short supply for these new labor movements, information should be readily available—not prescriptions saying, "You must do this; you must do that," but rather "Here are some of our experiences and our thoughts on them; feel free to consider and use anything that might be helpful."

However, many labor activists today know little or nothing about the last period of intense efforts to build international labor solidarity during the years 1978–2007. During these years, we saw the development of a totally new type of trade unionism—social movement unionism[3]—as developed by labor movements in Brazil, the Philippines, and South Africa, respectively. We also saw powerful labor movements develop in Poland and South Korea. All five of these labor movements played a central, if not the central, role in helping to overthrow the military dictatorship in their countries. In fact, they were some of the leading proponents of popular democracy in the world.

One of these labor organizations from which the concept of "social movement unionism" was developed was the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) Labor Center of the Philippines.[4] I contend there is a lot that can be learned from the KMU that would help advance global labor solidarity today.

The KMU or May First Movement[5] was created on May 1, 1980, as an effort to unite a number of labor movements that had emerged in various regional political economies of the country into one nationwide organization. That the KMU still exists to this day suggests they have done something right. That the members of the KMU have survived incredible opposition from the elites and the military of their country—including the assassination in 1986 of their national chairperson, massive numbers of arrests, torture, and deaths, as well as economic dislocation, and so on—suggests there is much to be learned from their experiences and, at the very least, suggests the need for their experiences to be shared with labor movements and researchers around the world.

This chapter focuses specifically on the KMU's development, and shares five findings that have emerged from my research on the KMU: how it has developed a new type of trade unionism, how it created new union organizations (alliances), how it emphasizes rank-and-file education, how it has built relations with sectoral organizations, and how it understands the need to build international labor solidarity.

Although the KMU's activities are largely unknown to many current researchers, these are experiences that I believe are of major interest today.

Overview[6]

Why did the KMU develop? What were the conditions that caused workers to create it? What has enabled it to survive and grow?

There were three reasons to found the KMU. First, workplace conditions were terrible, with management domination so strong that workers were almost completely at the mercy of their bosses. Second, the traditional unions had sold out workers, forsaking workers' interests and allowing labor "leaders" to maintain good graces with, and sometimes receive money from, managements. And third, there was a clear need for a workers' organization that would organize against foreign domination; as long as the country remained subservient to foreign interests, it would be unable to develop and confront the problems that faced its people.

The KMU was founded on May 1, 1980, during the dark days of the Marcos dictatorship. The seven founding union organizations had 35,000 members under collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) at the time, with an additional 15,000 as members but without CBAs.[7] After 10 years, there were 350,000 members under CBAs, and another 400,000 workers who were under the KMU but without CBAs.[8]

But there is obviously more to the KMU than just size or even membership growth. How did the KMU survive the repression of a dictator—including the arrest and detention of its chairperson, general secretary, and almost a hundred top leaders? How could the organization continue after the assassination of its subsequent chairperson, facing massive human rights violations and almost total opposition from the military and the ruling class? Where did the KMU find the strength to be able to lead and win its second national general strike within nine years of its founding?

Part of the KMU's power to endure is related to its basic principles of being genuine, militant, and nationalist. A top leader interviewed in 1986, who did not want his name used, explained what these principles mean to members of the KMU:

> By "genuine," we mean that the KMU is run by its members. The members are given all information and decide the policies that run the organization. By "militant," we mean that the KMU will never betray the interest of the working class, even at the risk of our own lives. The KMU believes workers become aware of their own human dignity through collective mass action. By "nationalist," we believe the wealth of the Philippines belongs to the Filipino people and that national sovereignty must never be compromised. The KMU is against the presence of the US bases. (quoted in Scipes 1987: 12)

In other words, the KMU is class conscious, believes that workers learn more from mass struggles than from leaders cutting back-room deals, and is determined that Filipinos should democratically control the Philippines.

The statement about never betraying the interests of the working class, even at the risk of KMU leaders' own lives, is not hyperbole; many KMU organizers, leaders, and members have been arrested and/or killed. The assassination of KMU chairperson Rolando Olalia in November 1986 demonstrated the risks involved in being a genuine trade unionist, even for those highest in the organization.

A New Type of Trade Unionism

A key aspect to the KMU's survival and growth is the organization's political concept of "genuine trade unionism." Genuine trade unionism (GTU) extends the scope of trade unionism beyond mere relations in the workplace; it also includes struggles over the political economy of the nation and its internal social relations (see Scipes 1999), and challenges the global political-economic networks in which the country is enmeshed, that is, imperialism. KMU-affiliated unions have developed this concept to the greatest extent in the Philippines, although some other labor organizations in the country have adopted it as well.

Genuine trade unionism opposes domination from without; it is against imperialist interference in the Philippines from particular nations such as the United States or Japan, as well as from institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the AFL-CIO.[9]

It is this involvement in the debate over the future direction and shape of the nation —together with the KMU's increasing ability to interfere with economic production due to its position in the nation's workplaces—that makes the KMU such an important subject for examination and understanding.[10]

Further organizational strengths are to be found in the internal processes within KMU-affiliated organizations: the KMU is committed to union democracy and accountability to its membership. It requires sacrifices from leaders and fights internal corruption. The KMU is controlled by its membership and not by any other organization from the left or the right.

Along with being genuine, militant, and nationalist, and developing genuine trade unionism and being democratically controlled, the KMU has developed because of three other factors: an organizational structure that combines vertical and horizontal connections, an extensive educational program, and its relations with other sectoral (peasants', women's) organizations.[11]

Organizational Structure

The first factor has to do with the particular structure in which the KMU is organized. The KMU is organized both "vertically" with centralized national federations, and "horizontally," by workers' alliances: this organizational grid overlays the entire organization.

Eleven national federations—similar to national or international unions in North America—are affiliated with the KMU. These are hierarchical organizations, with decision-making at a higher level superseding decisions made at lower levels. Each federation contains at least ten local unions.

These federations have a general membership: they organize any workers they can, although most federations concentrate on one or two particular industries. The National Union of Sugar Workers-Food and General Trades (NFSW-FGT) concentrates on sugar workers. Ilaw at Buklod ng Manggagawa (IBM: Light and Unity of Workers) is concentrated among employees of the San Miguel Corporation, a giant beer and food conglomerate. The Genuine Labor Organization of Workers in the

Hotel, Restaurant and Allied Industries (GLOWHRAIN) focuses on workers in hotels and restaurants. The Drug and Food Alliance of the Philippines (DFA) is in pharmaceuticals. The Alliance of Nationalist and Genuine Labor Organizations (ANGLO) emphasizes garments and textiles, while the United Workers of the Philippines (UWP) and Association of Democratic Labor Organizations (ADLO) are in garments and shoes. The Southern Philippines Federation of Labor (SPFL) focuses on mining and the wood industry, while the National Federation of Labor Unions (NAFLU) is in mining and longshoring. The National Federation of Labor (NFL) concentrates on the service industry and banana plantations, and the Organized Labor Associated in Line Industries and Agriculture (OLALIA) is concentrated among agricultural workers. The situation results in some overlap, but it also gives local unions a choice of federations to affiliate with, ensuring more responsive leadership.

Each federation provides legal assistance, orientation, directions for education, and plans for action—in coordination with the KMU—to their local union affiliates. In particular, federations give crucial assistance in workers' struggles to form local unions. They also help to gain recognition through winning certification elections and successfully completing collective bargaining agreements.

Local unions can affiliate with a federation by one of two different ways. A previously organized union may join a federation "indirectly." A group of workers seeking help in organizing may join "directly." George Aguilon, secretary general of United Workers of Southern Mindanao (NAHMAHMIN), explained, "In reality, there is no big difference. The only difference is that if you have indirectly affiliated, you can leave [the federation] at any time; if you are directly affiliated, you must wait until the CBA [collective bargaining agreement] expires before you can disaffiliate."[12]

The large majority of local unions are directly affiliated, meaning they must remain with their chosen federation throughout the life of the contract. Since the passage of the Herrera Law (RA 6715) in March 1989, this is a five-year period.

Besides additional membership, status, and therefore, power, affiliation brings in dues for the federation. For example, before it disaffiliated from the United Lumber and General Workers of the Philippines (ULGWP), the local union at Greenfields was the ULGWP's largest local union. Greenfields is a garment factory in Metro Manila, with 2,500 union members and another 500 workers paying agency dues for the union's representation of them with management. At Greenfields, workers were paying monthly dues of 10 pesos, three of which went to the local and seven to the federation. In addition to these dues, the federation won a P10,000-a-month education fee in the contract, which the company paid the federation. From this one factory, the federation was receiving P31,000 a month, more than one million pesos over a three-year period.[13]

However, despite the hierarchical organization of these federations, they are decentralized as much as possible. Federations are broken into island-wide and region-wide groupings, with the power to make decisions delegated to the lowest possible level of the organization.

The decentralized structure diffuses power throughout the organization. Marcos's effort in 1982 to cripple the KMU by arresting 69 key leaders, including the

chairperson and the secretary general, failed because of the KMU's decentralized organization.

Additionally, there is also an organization of women workers, the Kilusang Manggagawang Kababaihan (KMK: Women Workers' Movement), which is affiliated with KMU and is another type of alliance, this one based on gender. The KMU has 20,000 members. It has specifically been challenging women's oppression within the workplace, society, and the unions. In 1989, its programs focused on winning greater maternity leave benefits for all women, establishing day care facilities in workplaces, ending sexual harassment, and solving health problems of women workers in the factories.[14]

Besides the hierarchically structured federations and the KMK, there are the alliances. Alliances are "horizontal" coalitions of workers from different workplaces and unions, and are organized on the basis of geography, industry, or company ownership. The goal of each alliance is to unite workers for economic gain; provide self-defense from military harassment; win political demands outside the workplace; and give GTU education to all members.

Alliances are a more recent development in Filipino trade unionism, having been established in 1982. The first alliance, AMBA-BALA, was created by the overwhelmingly female workforce in the Bataan Export Processing Zone (BEPZ) in response to military repression against strikers at the Inter-Asia Company during June 1982. Flor Collantes of AMBA-BALA described events that led to the creation of that KMU provincial alliance:

> The workers had gone on strike to protest intensification of their work; previously each worker operated four machines in the textile plant; management increased this to six. The military intervened against the strikers, using fire trucks, truncheons, and mass arrests in an effort to break the strike.
>
> Although strikes in the zone were illegal, other workers realized that if they allowed the military to break the strike, then the military could break any strike. Further, they realized that BEPZ was a key component of the IMF/WB/Marcos development strategy for the country, and thus union organization would have a much greater importance there than in less strategic areas.
>
> The women organized clandestinely on the job, in the company-provided dormitories, and in the community. Workers in every factory in the zone were mobilized. On June 4, 1982, 26,000 workers walked out in support of the nine union organizers that had been fired by Inter-Asia and the 54 arrested picketers.
>
> This was the first general strike in any export processing zone in the world and it was successful: the strike was won, the union organizers reinstated, the people in jail released, and the first alliance, AMBA-BALA (literally meaning "AIM-BULLET"), was born (quoted in Scipes, 1987).

Each type of alliance organizes differently. Geographical alliances combine unions on the basis of locality and are the most powerful: these alliances can be formed on national, island, regional, province, city, or even district levels within particular cities. Industrial alliances unite unions in the same industry, such as health care, transportation, or mining. Conglomerate alliances join unions in multisite workplaces

owned by the same company. The industrial and conglomerate alliances focus more on workplace issues, while geographical alliances tend to focus on larger political issues —but transportation alliances have always been very involved on the political level as well. Additionally, while most alliances are affiliated with the KMU, each alliance often includes unions from outside the KMU.

Education

In conjunction with this innovative organizational structure that reinforces its member unions, the KMU has a very developed trade union education program. It serves as perhaps the key component in leadership development. And not only is the program extensive, but the leadership of all KMU organizations strongly stresses the education process.

Known by the general name of "genuine trade unionism," the KMU education program is composed of three different courses: PAMA, GTU, and KPD.

PAMA is a one-day introductory course, which is short enough that organizers can give basic educational training even on picket lines. In this course, workers are taught not only trade union rights and responsibilities but political economy as well. Surplus value is explained in a way all workers can understand. The term "imperialism" is demystified and shown to be a key explanation for the economic degradation and poverty of the country. Gaining national sovereignty is clearly shown to be an important part of the workers' struggle for liberation.

The three-day GTU course goes into greater detail. Workers discuss the problems of labor. They examine and analyze the differences between genuine trade unionism on one hand, and "yellow" unionism—whether of the "bread and butter /rice and fish" version or its more collaborationist form—on the other. They focus on the history of the Filipino labor movement and previous efforts to develop genuine trade unions. And workers discuss the struggle for national and working-class liberation.

The third course, KPD, propagates the national democratic program. Originally part of the GTU course, KPD has been further developed on its own. This focuses attention on the struggle for national democracy, which includes joining with different political forces fighting for national sovereignty. The goal of national democracy is the establishment of a truly independent country and a national democratic coalition government, based on the various sectors of society, such as peasants, workers, fisherfolk, women, urban poor, students, and so on.

Though these courses were formally developed in Metro Manila at the Ecumenical Institute for Labor Education and Research (EILER), a church-based organization, they were created in response to the high priority placed on member education at the KMU's founding congress in 1980. These courses were developed in the field—on picket lines and at union meetings—and brought back to Manila for integration and further development by EILER. They were then taken back into the field, tested, and then further modified when necessary.

Education centers have been established throughout the country. Each KMU federation has an education department, as do most KMU geographic alliances. Making information available and accessible to workers is their goal.

This information is not just for KMU members. In Bataan, workers demanded that all members of the provincial alliance—even unions affiliated with other labor centers—be given GTU education. This seems to be the case in most alliances. Also, in some areas, independent educational programs have been established, such as the Visayas Institute for Research and Trade Union Education in Cebu, which serves any union in the Visayas region.

This education process is one of the main differences between KMU organizations and those controlled by other labor groupings. The KMU tries to develop workers' understanding in order to get them involved in confronting their problems and the problems of the country. It uses every opportunity to educate workers, whether that is in the course of trying to win certification elections during respective "freedom periods" or helping workers take control over their own union to make it militant.

Key to this education process is the way it is run. Rather than just telling workers what they should think or do, KMU educators have developed curricula that enable workers to share their thoughts on various issues and discuss alternatives. It is through open discussion and input from the instructors that workers educate themselves and each other.[15]

The importance of this education simply cannot be exaggerated. It brings workers together, away from the worksite. It allows them to think about and discuss what they want and how they can best achieve their goals. It also allows them to interact with each other, building solidarity within the organization.

The most important result is the general empowerment of workers. Once workers have been through an education course, they get a real sense of themselves and what they are doing. While this sounds abstract, it comes through concretely in their determination in their particular struggles; maintaining a twenty-four hour picket line for over a year during a strike is common.

These courses also encourage workers to develop their own courses. For example, the IGMC Workers' Union in BEPZ developed a course for its members on the capitalist relations of production in the firm. Why is production arranged in the manner it is? What is the company trying to do? How are they able to do it? What can the union do to strengthen itself? Those are some of the questions that the course is focused on. The union had put all of its 700-plus members through the course by early 1986.

However, there is another aspect of these education programs that cannot be overlooked: they are key to building *internal solidarity* within each federation, local union, alliance, or other type of labor organization. In other words, KMU leaders recognize that a worker or a group of workers joining a union does not make them union members in any way beyond in name only; they must be *consolidated* as union members, which means they have to complete at least the organization's basic educational program. It is this recognition that internal solidarity must be *created*, not assumed, that has led to organizational development, which in turn has played an essential role in helping KMU survive the difficult circumstances with which it has been confronted.

Relations with Other Sectoral Organizations

In the Philippines, national democrats within each sector of society—such as workers, peasants, fisherfolk, women, urban poor, and students—have developed organizations to meet their specific needs. These are known as sectoral organizations.

Joining with sectoral organizations to fight for demands that would benefit the entire population of the Philippines, and refusing to limit KMU's interests only to workers and their problems, is another key factor in the KMU's development. Benefiting from this cross-sectoral unity, the people of the Philippines have been able to develop a tactic called a *welga ng bayan*, or "people's strike," that is even more powerful than the almost-mythic "general strike" in industrialized countries.

A *welga ng bayan* begins with a general workers' strike, but it is much more. In addition, all public transportation is stopped, all shops and stores are closed, and community members set up barricades to stop still-operating private vehicles or they join workers on their picket lines.

The first *welga ng bayan* took place in Davao City on Mindanao in 1984, during the dictatorship. The concerted actions of the people paralyzed most significant economic activity in response to increased military operations and brutality on the island. Two more island-wide people's strikes were launched during 1985, again protesting the militarization of the island. The third people's strike was so successful that when the island's military commander asked the leaders to call it off after one day, they refused. "We'll call it off when we reach our objectives," a leader told him.[16] The *welga ng bayan* lasted three days.

How did this tactic develop? Erasto "Nonoy" Librado, secretary general of KMU-Mindanao, explained that leaders from a number of sectoral organizations had noticed very little response to their efforts to win their particular demands; and they began talking to see if together they could all be more successful.[17] Their efforts paid off with a tactic that, while difficult to mobilize properly, was incredibly powerful when launched.

In May 1985, the various sectoral organizations, including the KMU, organized into a national alliance called the *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (BAYAN: New Patriotic Alliance). BAYAN, which means "people" or "country," is organized on a national level and it has local chapters in most major urban areas throughout the country.

The next significant people's strike took place in Bataan Province against the Westinghouse-built Bataan Nuclear Power Plant in 1985. This power plant, built on the side of a volcano in an active earthquake zone, was intended to supply electricity to Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Station, both US military bases, and to the export processing zone in Mariveles. The *welga ng bayan* was described:

> Several major protests have been launched against the plant. The largest was the three-day province-wide strike in June 1985. Eight towns were brought to a standstill. All banks, shops, schools, public transport, private businesses and government offices shut down. Even fishing boats in the local port refused to put out to sea. Workers from the industrial free trade zone, where the factories of the multinationals are located, marched for two days to join the protests. Workers blocked all roads to the nuclear power plant and grappled with

armoured cars sent to clear a way through. (Watts and Jackson, 1986)

The first nationwide *welga ng bayan* was launched in August 1987 in response to an oil price hike by the government. Although called off in response to a military coup attempt, the effort had immobilized 95 percent of the country's economically central cities beforehand. Interestingly, the next military coup attempt took place after plans for another nationwide people's strike had been announced but before it could be launched in December 1989. Another nationwide *welgang ng bayan* was carried out in October 1990.

Welga ng bayans prove that progressive Filipinos can gain much more together than they can alone. *Welga ng bayans* also show the KMU's recognition that labor must be involved in national issues that affect other sectors because these issues also affect workers as well.[18]

Building International Labor Solidarity

The KMU has placed a high interest in developing international labor solidarity. It has developed a six-part project designed to create international labor solidarity, with the centerpiece being the annual International Solidarity Affair (ISA) (Scipes 2000a).[19]

Each year at the ISA, the KMU invites workers and labor leaders from around the world to travel to the Philippines for an extensive ten-day program, revolving around the celebration of International Workers' Day (May 1). This is seen as a way to develop both international labor support for the struggles of the KMU and to help build international labor solidarity between Filipino workers and workers from other lands; hence, it is more than a one-way process. During this program, "visitors" are given an in-depth "exposure" to the day-to-day reality of Filipino workers. While the program includes formal ceremonies with national dignitaries and meetings with KMU leaders, its centerpiece is going out into the various regions of the Philippines and meeting workers and, at times, their families. This takes place at KMU members' workplaces, picket lines, and sometimes in their homes.

While working as a printer and being a member of the Graphic Communications International Union, AFL-CIO, I participated in the 1988 ISA along with workers and labor leaders from Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, France, Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United States. (There were also Japanese workers there but because of translation needs, they had a separate program.) I gave an extensive report of my experiences:

> Preparation was extensive. Prior to traveling to the Philippines, visitors received an orientation program that acquainted them with the country, and suggested what they would experience and what they might like to take with them. Preferences for where each person might like to travel or what they were specifically interested in seeing were solicited. In addition, visitors received information about how they should act while in workers' communities, what type of clothing was appropriate, and how they should donate money to an organization should they desire to do so.
>
> Once we were in the Philippines, we received a considerable amount of information. The KMU had prepared "orientation packets" for each visitor, in which we were given an overview of the national situation and the KMU's position on specific national issues such

as US military bases and specific information on the region that we would visit.

The importance the KMU placed on the ISA was evident. There was an impressive opening ceremony in which some of the visitors actively participated. Senator Wigberto Tañada of the Philippine Senate gave the keynote address. KMU chairperson Crispin Beltran and other leaders gave speeches, welcoming us to their country. The event was covered in the national media. And throughout the entire ten-day program, visitors had extensive access to high-level KMU leaders.

After the formal ceremonies, the visitors were informed where we would be visiting. The group was split up by destination and our respective guides gave us a "situationer" (situation report) for the area in which we would be traveling. I was traveling to Mindanao with Philip Statham, an Australian trade union official, and we were given a three-hour situationer by KMU-Mindanao deputy secretary general Joel Maglunsod, who had been flown in from Davao City to brief us and to serve as our guide.

Once in the provinces, after an introductory meeting with local area leaders, we were taken to meet with workers at various workplaces. During our 1988 visit to Davao City, we met hotel, dock, and garment workers. At each stop, we got an overview and analysis of their situation and an update on their current activities. We were encouraged to ask any questions we might have, and the union members shared their personal experiences and tried very hard to get us to understand. But we also gave reports on the situation for workers in our respective countries, and talked about how our labor movements were confronting the problems in our societies. The workers asked us questions: why did we come to the Philippines, and particularly Davao City? They wanted to know why we were willing to take serious risks—the vigilante movement (that is, death squads) was stronger in Davao City than anywhere else in the country, and quite obvious with numerous "check points" throughout the city—to come learn about their struggles.[20] As we talked, we got a sense of each other and one could also see solidarity being created. One man even gave me the address and phone number of a sister in California and asked me to call her and tell her he was okay—I was pleased at how much this message meant to her when I later contacted her and delivered it.

After spending a couple of days in the more urban parts of the city, we went to a rural part to visit workers on a banana plantation. These workers had been waging an intense struggle to maintain their union, with army units all around in this supposedly "rebel-infested" area. In fact, union officer Peter Alderite had been hacked to death by vigilantes using bolo knives the year before right outside the union office on the plantation. Other officers lived in the banana trees for months following the killing, although things had been a little quieter for a while.

We had an extensive program at the plantation. We received an in-depth briefing by the union president, who told us both about the union struggles and the labor process for growing bananas. We then spent hours walking around the plantation, talking to workers as they worked, who explained their tasks. We covered the whole range of the growing process, from planting to boxing the bananas for shipment. After spending the day in the workplace, we were invited by workers to visit their "community" and to eat with them. We met spouses and children, and visited their homes. We shared information about schooling in our respective societies and various aspects of our lives. Although very poor, they shared what they had and related to us as equals—they conveyed their strong sense of self-assurance and confidence that comes from having stood up for themselves and their colleagues. We then traveled to another part of the plantation and talked with Lisa and Philip Alderite, the widow and son of the slain union leader. It was a particularly intense

> conversation since we met on the first year anniversary of Peter's assassination. Afterwards, we returned to the community where people shared some homemade coconut wine called *tuba*. We spent the night on mats on the floor and had breakfast in the community before going to other parts of the plantation and meeting other workers.
>
> After several days in Davao City, we returned to Manila where we rejoined the other visitors. On May Day, we marched with approximately 150,000 workers through the streets of the city to Luneta Park for a spirited rally and speeches. The day after, we spent time sharing each group of visitors' particular experiences, and hearing the details of an armed attack on marchers in Laguna Province on May Day. The ISA ended with a *dispedida* (departure party). Among other activities, we sang songs of struggle from our respective homelands. It seemed an excellent way to end the ISA. (Scipes 2000a; for an account of the 2015 ISA, see Scipes 2015a)

Having a sense of what actually takes place during these visits allows one to see that there is a second part of this communications strategy: our presence signified to those workers that their lives, their struggles, their victories, their losses, and their pain were important to workers in other parts of the world. And that we were willing to spend considerable amounts of money to travel to the Philippines and then take certain risks to show our concern and make these connections illustrated to them that this was a serious concern, not something taken lightly. It is from this second part that one can see the ISA as a *mutual* communications process, an interlocking spiral, in which we learned from each other; it surpasses a one-way flow of information.

Conclusion

The men and women of the KMU have built a strong and powerful organization. The labor center is based on a philosophy of being genuine, militant, and nationalist and, from that philosophy, has developed the concept of GTU. Coupled with this has been a democratic decision-making process, a structure of federations and alliances that is mutually reinforcing, an elaborate and emphasized education program, alliances with other sectoral organizations, and a determination to build international labor solidarity.[21]

The KMU has unified organizations at a number of different levels into a national labor center. And it has survived for more than 14 years, something no previous radical labor center has accomplished in the Philippines.[22]

As a result, in its first ten years, the KMU has led two nationwide general workers' strikes and constituted a major force in a nationwide *welga ng bayan*, while continuing regional and provincial efforts. These national efforts have been undertaken by a combination of KMU unions, unions from other labor groupings, and sectoral organizations. The KMU, along with its allies, has built itself into a powerful economic and political force in the Philippines.

CHAPTER 7

Building a Culture of Solidarity Across the US-Mexico Border

David Bacon

In the period since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has come into effect, the economies of the United States and Mexico have become more integrated than ever. Through Plan Merida and partnerships on security, the military, and the drug war, the political and economic policies pursued by the US and Mexican governments are more coordinated than they've ever been.

Working people on both sides of the US-Mexico border are not only affected by this integration; workers and their unions in many ways are its object. These policies seek to maximize profits and push wages and benefits to the bottom, manage the flow of people displaced as a result, roll back rights and social benefits achieved over decades, and weaken working-class movements in both countries.

All this makes cooperation and solidarity across the border more important than ever. After a quarter century in which the development of solidarity relationships was interrupted during the Cold War, unions and workers are once again searching out their counterparts and finding effective and appropriate ways to support each other.

This chapter is not a survey of all the efforts that have taken place, especially since the NAFTA debate restarted the solidarity process in the early 1990s. Instead, it seeks to set out some questions and invite responses and contributions, especially from people involved in this cross-border movement. Among these questions are the following:

- How can we discard the blinders forged by the Cold War and expand our vision of what is possible?
- How is the political context changing on both sides of the border? Why is solidarity a necessary response to political and economic challenges?
- What part do migrants and the struggle for their rights play in solidarity between workers of both countries?
- How can we develop new ways of reaching across the border?

In discussing these questions, this chapter begins by looking at the growth of international solidarity on the border in the period after passage of NAFTA in 1994 and by pointing to some of the factors in both the United States and Mexico that led to it. It then assesses the changing relationship between US and Mexican unions generally in the post–Cold War era. Finally, it sees the migration of Mexicans to the United States as providing the material basis for the further growth of cross-border labor solidarity and examines some of the challenges posed by the debate of US immigration policy.

The Growth of Solidarity on the Border

The growth of cross-border solidarity today is taking place at a time when US penetration of Mexico is growing—economically, politically, and militarily. While the relationship between the United States and Mexico has its own special characteristics, it is also part of a global system of production, distribution, and consumption. It is not just a bilateral relationship.

Jobs go from the United States and Canada to Mexico in order to cut labor costs. But from Mexico, those same jobs go to China or Bangladesh or dozens of other countries where labor costs are even lower. Just as important, threats to move those jobs, experienced by workers in the United States from the 1970s onward, are now common in Mexico. Those threats force concessions on wages. In Sony's huge Nuevo Laredo factory, for instance, that threat was used to make workers agree to an indefinite temporary employment status, even though Mexican law prohibited it.

Multiple production locations undermine unions' bargaining leverage, since action by workers in a single workplace cannot shut down production for the entire corporation. The United Auto Workers (UAW), for instance, was beaten during a strike at Caterpillar in large part because, though the union could stop production in the United States, production in Mexico continued. Grupo México can use profits gained in mining operations in Peru to subsidize the costs of breaking a strike in Cananea.

The privatization of electricity in Mexico will not just affect Mexicans. Already plants built by Sempra Energy and Enron in Mexico are like maquiladoras, selling electricity into the grid across the border. As privatization grows, it will have an impact on US unions and jobs, giving utility unions in the United States a reason to help Mexican workers resist it. This requires more than solidarity between unions facing the same employer. It requires solidarity in resisting the imposition of neoliberal reforms like privatization and labor law reform.

At the same time, the concentration of wealth has created a new political situation in both countries. In Mexico, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional [PRI]) functioned as a mediator between organized workers and business. The PRI was founded as the National Revolutionary Party in 1929, as a social-democratic party at a time when the revolutionary upsurge in Mexico was still very strong. From the beginning, PRI governments used repression to stop the growth of social movements outside of the system it controlled. But the government also used negotiations in the interest of long-term stability. The interests of the wealthy were protected, but some sections of the population also received social benefits, and unions had recognized rights. In 1994, for instance, the government put leaders of Mexico City's bus union Sindicato Ùnico de los Trabajadores de Autotransportes Urbanos de Pasajeros Ruta-100 (SUTAUR) in prison; then it proceeded to negotiate with them while they were in jail.

The victory of Vicente Fox and the National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional [PAN]) in 2000 created a new situation. PAN was a small conservative party allied to the Catholic Church through most of the post-revolutionary period. Widespread popular anger at PRI, however, created a political opening in the 1990s in which it refashioned its image into a party opposed to the government, calling for "reforms."

Once in power, however, PAN implemented policies even more responsive to Mexico's growing corporate class. That class, grown rich and powerful because of earlier PRI-imposed reforms, no longer desired the same kind of social pact or its political intermediaries. The old corporatist system, in which unions had a role, was no longer necessary. Meanwhile employers and the government have been more willing to use force. Unions like the Mexican Electrical Workers Union (Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas [SME]) and miners face not just repression, but destruction. The return of the PRI to power with the election of Enrique Peña Nieto in 2012 did not change this direction or return Mexico to its earlier political system.

In the United States a similar process took place during the years after the Vietnam War, when corporations made similar decisions. After the federal government broke the air traffic controllers' (PATCO) strike in 1981, the use of strikebreakers became widespread. Corporations increasingly saw even business unions as unnecessary for maintaining social peace and continued profits. Union organizing became a kind of labor warfare. A whole industry of union busters appeared, making the process set up by US labor law in the 1930s much less usable by workers seeking to organize.

Labor law reform, national health care, and other basic pro-worker reforms became politically impossible in the post-Vietnam era, even under Democratic presidents whom unions helped elect. Public workers succeeded in organizing during this period, however, and eventually US union strength became more and more concentrated in that sector. But much as the public sector in Mexico came under attack, the US public sector became the target for the US right, for similar reasons. This, too, changed the landscape for solidarity, giving the most politically powerful section of the US labor movement, at least potentially, a greater interest in solidarity with Mexican labor.

In both countries, the main union battles are ones to preserve what workers have previously achieved, rather than to make new gains. Mexican unions are enmeshed in the state labor process, in which the government still certifies unions' existence, and to a large degree controls their bargaining. In the United States, labor is endangered by economic crisis, falling density, and an increasingly hostile political system. This leads to a rise in nationalism and protectionism, creating new obstacles for solidarity.

As the attacks against unions grow stronger, solidarity is becoming necessary for survival. Unions face a basic question on both sides of the border: can they win the battles they face today, especially political ones, without joining their efforts together? Fortunately, this is not an abstract question. Enormous progress has taken place over the last two decades.

US and Mexican Unions React to NAFTA

The US labor movement had to be dragged by its base into opposing NAFTA. The AFL-CIO's international apparatus in Washington, DC, had a history during the Cold War of supporting free trade and US foreign policy. But the unions it supported in Mexico, especially the Confederation of Mexican Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores de México [CTM]), lined up behind the Mexican government and therefore supported the treaty. As unionists in the United States became interested in opposing free trade and NAFTA, and in finding Mexican unions with the same

concerns, the AFL-CIO's International Affairs Department had no will to help them and no partners with which they could cooperate.

Individual US unions began looking across the border for themselves, seeking new contacts with unions opposed to the free trade agreement. At a meeting that set up the Mexican Network Against Free Trade, union activists from the United States met leaders of a small independent and democratic labor federation, the Authentic Workers Front (Frente Auténtico del Trabajo [FAT]), originally founded in 1960 as part of the progressive Catholic movement. The FAT's general secretary Benedicto Martinez traveled the United States in the free trade caravan, organized by the Teamsters Union, to build rank-and-file opposition to NAFTA. He spoke in many meetings of the United Electrical workers (UE). He remembers:

> NAFTA shocked a lot of US unions out of their inertia—not so much their national leaders, but people in local unions. They're the ones who began pushing the structure to move on globalization, to form new international relations and look for solidarity. That's what moved their leaders to pay attention to the border. It was people in local unions that began building the bridges across the border to unions in Mexico. The more local unions got involved, the broader this movement became.

The NAFTA debate provoked discussion about the relationship between workers in Mexico and the United States. Many union members responded by supporting efforts to organize independent unions in the border plants. "It was a kind of school," Martinez recalls. "It was not so easy anymore for someone to say that Mexicans were stealing jobs. They could see there was a real problem."

The border provided an area for experimenting with new ways to organize workers. The following decade saw an explosion of activity on the border. The maquiladora organizing drive at Plásticos Bajacal in Tijuana in 1993 first highlighted for US unions the reality of representation elections in which voting was done publicly, in front of company representatives, with no secret ballot. The San Diego Support Committee for Maquiladora Workers raised enough money to pay lost time for fired workers so they could continue organizing the factory.

The AFL-CIO's Ed Feigan, Sister Susan Mika, and religious orders set up the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras (CJM) in the late 1980s, which was dominated at the beginning by US unions and organizations. As it began to coordinate campaigns all along the border—CustomTrim/AutoTrim, Duro Bag, Lajat/Levi's and others—the role of organizations within the coalition changed. Women from the local plants and communities became more assertive, while large unions and organizations grew uncomfortable, feeling they could no longer hold the coalition accountable.

The worker rebellion at the huge Sony factory was the first major battle under NAFTA, and the first place where the false promises of its labor side agreement became obvious. Hundreds of workers were beaten in front of the plant in 1993 when they ran candidates in their CTM union's election. When that door was closed, they tried to form an independent union and were blocked by the company and the Mexican government in 1994, the year when NAFTA went into effect. The treaty contained a side agreement, the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation, that backers of

the treaty promised would provide a means for workers and unions to enforce labor rights. In a ritual that would be repeated over the next two decades, however, workers and unions in the United States, Mexico, and Canada filed charges that Mexico was violating its own labor law in preventing workers from organizing independent unions, but after a series of hearings, the only available remedy was a series of discussions with Mexican government representatives that produced no results on the ground.

The leader of the Sony workers, Martha Ojeda, was smuggled by her coworkers across the Rio Grande to Texas, and she eventually became director of the CJM.

In the late 1990s, two strikes at Tijuana's Han Young factory led to killing fast-track authorization in the US Congress for the Free Trade Area of the Americas. The independent union there became one of the first to successfully force the government to give it legal status. Los Angeles' big oil union, which later became a local of the United Steelworkers (USW), was a major source of support for the strikers. An investigation by the Maquiladora Health and Safety Support Network documented dangerous conditions and lack of inspections that violated Mexican law, as the network also did at CustomTrim/AutoTrim. Those experiences in maquiladoras were the precursors of the later investigation into silicosis among striking miners in Cananea.

The Border Committee of Women Workers (Comité Fronterizo de Obreras) organized workers at Alcoa Fujikura beginning in 1997 and even forced Alcoa's CEO to negotiate over conditions there. Enlace, a unique coalition of Mexican and US unions and nongovernmental organizations, supported living-wage campaigns among maquiladora workers in northern Mexico in 2001 and battles for independent unions at Sara Lee. It became the support base for Sindicato Independiente de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de la Industria Maquila (SITTIM), an independent union of workers in Baja California's maquiladora industry. The union first organized garment workers in Korean-owned factories, and then workers in Korean-owned seafood processing plants, in Baja California Sur in 2002 and 2003. Both during the Han Young and SITTIM campaigns, the workers made contact with the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), a significant step since Korean corporations own a substantial part of Mexico's maquiladora industry. The KCTU is the more radical of South Korea's two main labor centers. Workers at huge Hyundai plants belong to a KCTU affiliate and pressured management in South Korea to try to force Han Young managers to respect the right of workers to an independent union. Similar efforts were made to pressure the Korean owners of Baja California fish-processing plants.

Struggles have taken place in maquiladoras for two decades all along the border. Many centers or collectives of workers have come together over those years. Walkouts over unpaid wages, over severance and termination pay, and over terrible conditions are still relatively common. Local activists still find ways to support them, such as Collective Ollin Calli in Tijuana and its network of allies across the border in Tijuana, the San Diego Maquiladora Workers' Solidarity Network.

Over the years, support from many US unions and churches, and from unions and labor institutions in Mexico City, has often been critical in helping these collectives survive, especially during the pitched battles to win legal status for independent

unions. But overall, that support has not been constant. Often the worker groups in the maquiladoras and the cities of the border have had to survive on their own, or with extremely limited resources. While workers may whisper in secret about Martha Ojeda, and call her when they are in deep trouble, the resource base for the coalition has diminished seriously during the current recession. Many organizations have stopped supporting it.

María Estela Ríos González—a CJM board member, the former president of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, and the former legal adviser to Andrés Manuel López Obrador when he was Mexico City mayor—believes that one thing limiting a greater commitment to workers' struggles on the border is a perception in Mexico City that the border region is a remote area, far from the places where decisive changes are made in the country's direction. "Local struggles on the border have never been successful in becoming national causes," she charges.

Large US unions and organizations also often see border struggles as remote from their main base of membership and concerns. The USW, which represents copper miners near the border, is an exception. And locals of the United Food and Commercial Workers in the southwest now face a large Mexican grocery store chain, El Super, and have become much more active in seeking solidarity with unions in Mexico as a result.

In addition, the difficulties of maintaining a cross-border relationship in which unorganized factory workers play a leading role have never been adequately examined. In the CJM, grassroots groups consisting mostly of women organized on a community basis often voiced different interests and perspectives than did large US unions and organizations that provided funding for coalition activities. Grassroots groups wanted resources, along with the autonomy to decide how they would be used. Large unions wanted accountability, and the ability to decide when and how campaigns would be organized.

Despite the flight of many jobs to China, a US economic recession that has caused massive layoffs in border plants, and extreme levels of violence in many border communities, the maquiladora industry in northern Mexico is still enormous. Three thousand plants employ over 1.3 million workers. It is not just the size of the industry that makes these plants important: they've been the laboratories for the rightward shift in labor law and labor relations, now being applied to workers across Mexico. The states are a stronghold of political conservatism and corporate power because of the disenfranchisement of their working population.

A vibrant and strong labor movement on the border would change Mexico's politics. The influence of the maquiladoras on US employment and runaway production over the years is undeniable, and strong unions there would have a tremendous impact on US labor too. The growth of labor solidarity in the last two decades between the United States and Mexico owes a lot to the border labor wars. It was there that US unions first acquired a clear vision of the importance of their relations with Mexican workers. The decline in activity in border factories over the last few years, and in the support from major unions and institutions in both countries for it, is a real weakness in the efforts to build a culture of labor solidarity.

Growing Ties Between Mexican and US Labor

In Mexico, the NAFTA debate led to the organization of the Action Network Opposing Free Trade, which in turn helped to spark the relationship between the UE and the FAT. That relationship remains a model for solidarity between two unions, based on equality and mutual interest, preserving each union's ability to make its own decisions autonomously. It has been a relationship based on real campaigns on the ground—organizing drives, strikes, and resistance to proposals like the PRI labor law reform. Rank-and-file workers in both unions have played an important part in those efforts.

In the solidarity upsurge of the late 1990s onward, other unions also have found counterparts across the border and tried to develop ongoing relationships. The Communications Workers of America first supported efforts by maquiladora workers in a small Cananea factory and then established a close relationship with the Mexican Telephone Workers. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) sent delegations, first to Veracruz when its longshore union was smashed, and then to Pacific Coast ports as they were being privatized. The ILWU has a relationship with the Federation of Stevedores on the Pacific Coast, which is part of the Revolutionary Confederation of Mexican Workers (Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana [CROM]). The culture of this old, official union, however, which is still tied to the PRI, is very different from the left-wing culture of the ILWU. While they have a common interest facing their mutual employers—huge shipping companies—neither union has been able to put forward a plan for mutual action.

Frustrated with the slow pace of union organizing in Mexico, the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center assisted the formation of the Workers Support Center (Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador [CAT]) in Puebla, which led to pitched battles in the state's maquiladoras, and some important victories. The first came at Mex Mode (Kuk Dong), where the CAT helped set up an independent union. The United Students Against Sweatshops then successfully pressured Nike Corporation into forcing the sweatshop's management to recognize it and bargain. The CAT helped workers organize at a Johnson Controls plant. The UAW in the United States, which had earlier organized plants of the same company, pressured it into recognizing the union in Puebla. But subsequent campaigns at clothing plants met with heavy repression.

The CAT drives developed a sophisticated strategy using cross-border leverage against Mexican and US employers in a well-defined geographical area, producing for the US market. Those campaigns only received lukewarm support from the Mexican independent labor movement for the first few years. Recently, however, that has changed. The Puebla union at Johnson Controls joined the Mexican miners' union (the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Mineros, Metalúrgicos, Siderúrgicos y Similares, or "Los Mineros") after it won recognition. Los Mineros, who have begun a process of merging with the USW, are locked in an all-out conflict with the Mexican government and Grupo Mexico. Yet the union is committed to offering resources to Puebla maquiladora workers, and the workers in turn are unafraid to join a union engaged in fierce battles.

The decision by Los Mineros and USW to draw together rises from their joint struggles in the mines along the US-Mexico border, especially the long strike in Cananea. Cananea is a small town in the Sonoran Desert, just south of the Arizona border. It is the site of one of the world's largest copper mines, now owned by the giant Grupo Mexico. Many historians date the beginning of the Mexican Revolution to an uprising by miners in Cananea in 1906 against the then US owner, Colonel William Greene.

Workers in US and Mexican mines have a long history of mutual support, even family relationships. While the Cold War restrained such support activity for some years, the Cananea strike in 1998 restarted relationships. Mexican miners came up to Arizona, and their appeals led to caravans of trucks filled with food going south. Support came from the Southern Arizona Labor Council in Tucson, headed by Jerry Acosta, and from USW mine locals in Arizona.

When Napoleón Gómez Urrutia became president of Los Mineros, and increasingly challenged Grupo Mexico and the Mexican government, the USW support efforts increased. Grupo Mexico bought ASARCO, giving the two unions a common employer. In June 2007, Los Mineros struck the Cananea mine, and Gómez Urrutia was forced into exile. The USW offered him a home in Vancouver, British Columbia, and the union became a critical source of support for the Cananea strikers, contributing food and money. It organized US health and safety experts to go to Cananea to expose the dangers of silicosis in the mine, one of the reasons for the strike. The USW brought the AFL-CIO into its support activity, and together they pressured both the US and Mexican governments.

USW legal and political assistance, coordinated by Manny Armenta, a regional organizer for the United Steel Workers, helped Los Mineros win a series of court decisions upholding the legality of the Cananea strike and defending the Los Mineros leadership against government legal charges and repression. After three years, the government and Grupo Mexico finally used armed force to reopen the Cananea mine, but they had to do it in the face of numerous decisions declaring such action illegal. Reopening the mine is one of the clearest examples of the unwillingness of the Mexican government and large corporations to respect the rule of law.

The conflict has grown even more intense over the renegotiation of the USW contract with ASARCO. During the last negotiation of that agreement, Grupo Mexico, although it was the owner of the bankrupt US employer, could not control it in bargaining. Now Grupo Mexico and the USW face each other directly. After years in which the union has defended Gómez Urrutia from the corporation's attacks, and supported the strikers in Cananea, this conflict is becoming much sharper.

Since 2009, the two unions have discussed a merger of their organizations. The idea raises important questions about how such an organization would function under different labor-law systems. It also poses challenging questions about how a binational organization would ensure the autonomy of its members in each country and their ability to act in their own interest. Given the Cold War history of US intelligence operations in Mexico, it is not a question that Mexicans are likely to take lightly.

The support by US unions for independent union campaigns in maquiladoras has

always been attacked by right-wing Mexican media, government officials, and employers, who have all accused the Mexican workers and unions involved of betraying their country. They have charged US unions with "trying to make trouble" in order to chase employers who have moved production to Mexico into returning to the United States.

Progressive Mexican unions have had to fight to redefine what nationalism should mean. They have argued that the neoliberal development model itself undermines the true interests of Mexican workers, who have the right to fight Mexican employers and to receive solidarity from US unions when they do it. Further, they charge, the real betrayal is by Mexican authorities, who allow foreign companies to break Mexican labor law. Their position defends not only the historic rights of Mexican workers but also the motives behind the solidarity offered by US unions.

"We don't want to live in a country that's attracting jobs from other countries like the US and Canada, using the competitive advantage of low wages, the lack of enforcement of labor laws, and even ecological damage," says Francisco Hernandez Juárez, leader of the telephone union (Sindicato de Telefonistas de la Repùblica Mexicana) and the independent National Union of Workers (Unión Nacional de Trabajadores).

> These jobs are bound to be temporary anyway; they don't give us any permanent benefit, and eventually when there's some unfavorable event, they move to countries where the labor is even cheaper. The majority of Mexicans are being plunged into poverty. It will get worse if we continue depending exclusively on producing for foreign markets, especially the United States, and if we ignore our domestic market. We won't accept turning into a maquiladora country that's attractive simply because of its cheap labor. Through our unions, we want to establish more complex and complete labor relations that permit us to be competitive in making more sophisticated products.

The fight over that political direction is at the heart of the Mexican government's attack on the SME. Here, solidarity efforts from the United States are not based on a fight against a common employer but instead challenge the free-trade and free-market reforms behind the attack on the Mexican union.

President Calderón declared Mexico's oldest and most progressive major union "nonexistent" in October of 2009. He dissolved the state-owned Power and Light Company (Luz y Fuerza del Centro) for central Mexico and fired all of the SME's forty-four thousand members who worked there. Most Mexicans believe this is a prelude to privatizing the electrical industry. Already almost half of the electricity generated in the country comes from private producers. Despite the attacks, the union has been able to win back its legal recognition and is fighting for the rights and jobs of the sixteen thousand members who have refused to accept their termination.

US unions stayed out of previous fights over privatization, especially around electrical generation, in part because the SME is still affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). The WFTU was organized in 1945 when the United Nations was founded, originally with CIO participation, and joined by British and Soviet trade unions. But almost all US unions later abandoned it at the beginning of the Cold War. The WFTU became the rival of the International Confederation of Free

Trade Unions, in which the AFL played a major role.

During the 1930s, in the heady days of the organization of the largest industrial unions in the United States, Mexican labor leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano and other Latin American labor radicals built ties between progressive union federations from Canada to Central America.

These traditions were largely abandoned after World War II. Instead, the Cold War defense of US foreign policy and corporate interests, coupled with domestic hostility to immigrants and radicals, were promoted by the international apparatus of the AFL-CIO. Its ultimate expression was cooperation with the Pinochet coup in Chile in September 1973, and the massacring of Chilean trade unionists, and similar cooperation in the murder of left-wing trade unionists in Brazil, Central America, and other countries in the name of "fighting communism." Cooperation between the US intelligence establishment and the AFL-CIO's International Department in Mexico also led to US labor support for the suppression and imprisonment of Mexican labor radicals during the Cold War.[1]

In Mexico, however, Cold War barriers began to soften after the leadership of the AFL-CIO changed in 1995. "There's more discussion with the SME," said Stan Gacek, a staffer at the International Affairs Department in the early 2000s. "It's on a de facto basis, although not on any grand scale. But a number of WFTU affiliates are talking to us because they've gotten over the Cold War and so have we. There are broader and more important common objectives."

As the Mexico-US labor solidarity movement grew, so did the number of US activists who saw the important role the SME plays in Mexican politics. They respected its democratic structure and strong contract. In earlier confrontations with Mexican administrations, unions like the UE, whose relationship with the SME goes back decades, mobilized US support.

When Mexican president Felipe Calderón launched his attack in 2009, that network was mobilized. At the UE's website, the journal *Mexican Labor News and Analysis* became a main source of news as the union fought to maintain picket lines at installations and launched a hunger strike in the Zócalo, the heart of Mexico City. News also came from the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center's Ben Davis (now with the USW), who was already putting out daily bulletins for Los Mineros. Progressive journalists began covering the fight, in the complete absence of any mainstream US media coverage.

In the meantime, delegations of SME leaders, including Humberto Montes de Oca and Pipino Cuevas, came to the United States, hosted by the San Francisco chapter of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and local labor councils. Their efforts led eventually to press conferences and meetings between SME and AFL-CIO leaders in Washington, DC, and complaints at the International Labour Organization and under NAFTA's labor side agreement. Los Angeles unionists sent a delegation to the Mexican consulate, as did other areas.

In February of 2013, five international union bodies—the International Metalworkers' Federation; International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions; International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF); UNI

Global Union; and the International Trade Union Confederation—cooperated in organizing actions in forty countries. Over fifty thousand workers, students, and human rights activists demonstrated at Mexican consulates or otherwise showed their public opposition to the reform. Twenty-seven actions took place in Mexico itself.

The international federations and Mexican unions formed a coalition, which agreed to press the government to abolish the protection contract system and to stop the use of force against strikers at the Cananea mine, at the Power and Light Company, and in other similar situations. The unions demanded an end to repression against the miners' union and the SME, and that government officials be held responsible for the explosion at the Pasta de Conchos coal mine.

US solidarity activists used several arguments to win US labor support. With power workers, they explained that the destruction of SME and privatization of generation would lead eventually to Mexican power exports to the United States, using low wages and a lack of unions to undercut US production costs. This argument also helped win support from fair-trade organizations.

The solidarity effort with the SME did not have a base in a particular US union, however, as the FAT has with the UE or Los Mineros with the USW. That limited the Mexican union's ability to plan and carry out a long-term cross-border campaign. But after the struggle had gone on for a year, the Utility Workers Union of America organized a trinational conference of unions in the electrical-generation industry. SME leaders made a successful appeal for support and a more permanent relationship. The struggle against privatization is still not a high priority in US labor, but many US utility unions represent workers at public utilities and understand the threat. In addition, the current attack against US public workers has created a labor audience more sympathetic to appeals to defend public workers in Mexico.

The big turn away from the Cold War in US labor came when John Sweeney was elected AFL-CIO president in 1995. Richard Trumka, then secretary-treasurer and elected AFL-CIO president in 2009, called for dropping the Cold War prohibition on relations with left-wing unions like the SME and declared that solidarity should be based on cooperation between unions facing common employers, regardless of their politics. The USW / Los Mineros relationship is based in part on that idea.

Cross-border solidarity in US labor is still oriented toward private industry and mutual support during confrontations with huge corporations. It is less focused on opposition to the neoliberal policies pursued by both the US and Mexican governments, regardless of which political party is in power. US unions often see their own needs first. A heightened sense of solidarity requires fighting the battles prioritized by other unions, not just fighting your own battles in someone else's country. US unions are still learning what it would mean to Mexican labor and progressive movements if the SME were destroyed. They would find it much more difficult to develop Mexican allies in a climate of growing repression and a weakened left.

When many US workers think about Mexico, they envision it as the place their jobs have gone. If US workers have lost those jobs, then Mexican workers must have gotten them. Ross Perot captured their imagination by referring to job loss to Mexico

as “the giant sucking sound.” The message from Perot and right-wing broadcaster Lou Dobbs is that Mexican workers are the enemy, the ones who “stole your job.”

In the United States, most workers don’t understand displacement, or the enormous impact NAFTA and neoliberal policies have had on Mexicans. As a result, when Mexicans cross the border looking for work, many US workers often do not understand who they are or why they have come.

The labor movements on both sides are paying a heavy price for giving a low priority to the education of their members. Anti-immigrant hysteria and hostility toward solidarity go hand in hand, and unions must take education more seriously. In the United States, former AFL-CIO education director Bill Fletcher initiated a program called “Common Sense Economics”—an effort to teach union members about globalization and the way it affects them. The program was terminated, however, and Fletcher was reassigned. That effort has to begin again. This is a serious brake on winning a mass base for solidarity activity among rank-and-file workers.

A culture of solidarity asks workers to take a long-term view of their interests. It asks them to look beyond getting a contract tomorrow for their own union or getting a card signed so the union can start bargaining. Both are necessary. But so is a better understanding of their stake in helping workers beyond their country’s borders. Solidarity means knowing that workers in one country cannot keep their contracts or jobs if workers across the border are losing theirs.

Immigration and the Culture of Solidarity

One indispensable part of education and solidarity is greater contact between Mexican union organizers and their US counterparts. The base for that contact already exists in the massive movement of people between the two countries.

Miners fired in Cananea, or electrical workers fired in Mexico City, become workers in Phoenix, Los Angeles, and New York. Twelve million Mexican workers in the United States are a natural base of support for Mexican unions. They bring with them the experience of the battles waged by their unions. They can raise money and support. Their families are still living in Mexico, and many are active in political and labor campaigns. As workers and union members in the United States, they can help win support from US unions for the battles taking place in Mexico.

This is not a new idea. It is what the Flores Magón brothers were doing for the uprising in Cananea in 1906. It is why the Mexican left sent activists and organizers to the Rio Grande Valley in the 1930s, and to Los Angeles in the 1970s. All these efforts had a profound impact on US unions and workers. The sea change in the politics of Los Angeles in the last two decades, while it has many roots, shows the long-term results of immigrants gaining political power, and the role of politically conscious immigrant organizers in that process.

Today some US unions see the potential in organizing in immigrant communities. But most unions in Mexico, in contrast to the past, don’t see this movement of people as a resource they can or should organize.

What would happen if Mexican unions began sending organizers or active workers north into the United States? In reality, active members are already making that move,

and have been for a long time. Yet there is no organized way of looking at this. Where, for instance, will the people displaced in today's Mexican labor struggles go? In 1998, almost nine hundred active blacklisted miners from Cananea had to leave after their strike that year was lost. Many came to Arizona and California. In Mexico City, twenty-six thousand SME members took the *indemnización* (severance pay) and gave up claim to their jobs and unions. Many of them will inevitably be forced to go to the United States to look for work.

Cananea miners and Mexico City electrical workers have a wealth of experience and a history of participation in a progressive and democratic union. They can help both workers in the United States, and those they've left back home, building unions in the places they go to work. But to use their experience effectively, unions on both sides of the border need to know who they are and where they're going and see them as potential organizers.

Solidarity and the migration of people are linked. The economic crisis in Mexico is getting worse, with no upturn in sight. With a 40 percent poverty rate, the government still has no program for employment beyond encouraging investment with lower wages and fewer union rights. And since the maquila sector is tied to the US market, it experiences even worse mass layoffs than other Mexican sectors, with the waves of unemployed then crossing the border just a few miles away from their homes.

Seven million Mexicans left for the United States in the NAFTA period, a flow of people that now affects almost every family, even in the most remote parts of the country. Migration has become an important safety valve for the Mexican economy, and it also relieves pressure on the Mexican government. The government uses the tens of billions of dollars in remittances to make up for social investment cut under pressure from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Teachers' strikes, like the one in Oaxaca in 2006 or the more recent ones in the last three years, mushroom into insurrections because there is no alternative to migration and an economic system increasingly dependent on remittances.

Economic reforms and displacement create unemployed workers—for border factories, or for US agriculture and meatpacking plants. Displacement creates a reserve army of workers available to corporations as low-wage labor. If demand rises, employers don't have to raise wages. In a time of economic crisis, unemployed people are used to pressure employed workers, making them less demanding and more fearful of losing their jobs.

Displacement and migration are not byproducts of the global economy. The economic system in both Mexico and the United States is dependent on the labor that displacement produces. Former Mexican president Felipe Calderón said on a visit to California, "You have two economies. One economy is intensive in capital, which is the American economy. One economy is intensive in labor, which is the Mexican economy. We are two complementary economies, and that phenomenon is impossible to stop."

To employers, migration is a labor-supply system. US immigration policy is not intended to keep people from crossing the border; it determines the status of people once they are in the United States. It is designed to supply labor to employers at a

manageable cost, imposed by employers. It makes the laborers themselves vulnerable, especially those who come through guest-worker programs, where employers can withdraw their ability to stay in the country by firing them.

The economic pressure that produces migration has a big impact on relations between US and Mexican labor. Today, for instance, governments and employers on both sides of the border tell unions that support for labor-supply, or guest-worker, programs is part of a beneficial relationship. Any movement for solidarity has to address this corporate pressure. A union alliance with employers on immigration policy, based on helping them use migration as a labor-supply system, creates a large obstacle to any effort to defend the rights of migrants.

Instead, US and Mexican unions need a common program on trade, displacement, and investment, which calls for increasing the security of workers and farmers and reducing displacement and forced migration.

Anti-immigrant policies were part of Cold War politics in the US labor movement. The AFL-CIO supported employer sanctions, the section of US immigration law passed in 1986 that essentially made work a crime for people without papers. They argued that if undocumented workers couldn't support their families, they would deport themselves.

The growth of the cross-border movement coincided with the rise of the immigrant rights movement. In the 1990s, as labor activists pushed for support for unions in Mexico, they also organized to repeal sanctions. First, the garment unions called for repeal, then the Service Employees International Union, then the California Labor Federation, and others. They argued that employers used the law to threaten and fire undocumented workers to keep them from organizing unions. Unions trying to organize and grow began to see immigrants as potential members—workers who would strike and organize. They therefore opposed the idea of pushing Mexicans back across the border because they wanted them to become active in the United States. They saw immigrants not just as a force on the job but also in politics. As people gained legal status and then became citizens, they could also vote and elect public officials who would act in workers' interests.

Today, unions criticize the racial-profiling law Arizona Senate Bill 1070 for the same reason—not just that it leads to discrimination, but also that it is wrong to make workers leave.

In 1999, the AFL-CIO finally reversed itself and called for repealing sanctions, for amnesty for the undocumented, for protecting the organizing rights of all workers, and for family reunification. The federation already had a long-standing position calling for ending guest-worker programs.

Gradually, unions have seen the importance of workers with feet planted on both sides of the border. This is an important part of building a culture of solidarity. The United Farm Workers (UFW), for instance, developed a strategic partnership with a progressive organization in the immigrant workforce, the Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations (Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales [FIOB]). It hired Oaxacan activists fluent in indigenous languages as organizers and supported indigenous Oaxacan communities in protests against police harassment in cities like

Greenfield in the Salinas Valley of California. During the recent strike of farmworkers in the San Quintín Valley in Baja California, both the UFW and FIOB sent support from the United States, and FIOB, with members in the valley, played an important role in the strike itself.

Oaxacan immigrants today are an important and growing section of many immigrant communities in the United States, especially the rural areas where people work in farm labor. The FIOB is one of many organizations among Oaxacans that people have brought with them from their home state or have organized as migrants on their travels. Many of its founders were strike organizers and social activists in Oaxaca and the fields of northern Mexico. Years ago they saw the organizing possibilities among people dispersed as a result of displacement, but whose communities now exist in many places in both Mexico and the United States.

For over half a century, migration has been the main fact of social life in hundreds of indigenous towns spread through the hills of Oaxaca. That's made the conditions and rights of migrants central concerns. But the FIOB and its base communities today also talk about another right, the right to stay home. Asserting this right challenges not just inequality and exploitation facing migrants but also the very reasons people migrate.

According to the Indigenous Farmworker Study the number of indigenous workers in California fields alone numbered 165,000—undoubtedly an undercount. These men and women come from communities whose economies are totally dependent on migration. The ability to send a son or daughter across the border to the north, to work and send back money, makes the difference between eating chicken or eating salt and tortillas. Migration means not having to manhandle a wooden plough behind an ox, cutting furrows in dry soil for a corn crop that can't be sold for what it cost to plant it. It means that dollars arrive in the mail when kids need shoes to go to school, or when a grandparent needs a doctor.

"There are no jobs here, and NAFTA pushed the price of corn so low that it's not economically possible to plant a crop anymore," says Rufino Dominguez, former binational coordinator for the FIOB, and now head of Oaxaca's Institute for Attention to Migrants. In the 1980s, Dominguez was a strike organizer in Sinaloa and Baja California. "We come to the US to work because we can't get a price for our product at home. There's no alternative."

Without large-scale political change, most local communities will not have the resources for productive projects and economic development that could provide a decent living. "We need development that makes migration a choice rather than a necessity—the right to not migrate," explains FIOB's former binational coordinator Gaspar Rivera-Salgado, a professor at UCLA. "But the right to stay home, to not migrate, has to mean more than the right to be poor, the right to go hungry and homeless. Choosing whether to stay home or leave only has meaning if each choice can provide a meaningful future."

At the same time, because of its indigenous membership, FIOB campaigns for the rights of migrants in the United States who come from those communities. It calls for immigration amnesty and legalization for undocumented migrants. It campaigned

successfully for translation and language rights in US courtrooms, and protested immigration sweeps and deportations. The FIOB also condemns the proposals for guest-worker programs. “Migrants need the right to work, but these workers don’t have labor rights or benefits,” Dominguez charges. “It’s like slavery.”

Today, there is increasing interest among US farmworker unions in activity in Mexico. Recent strikes by farmworkers in Baja California were supported by local unions in Southern California and the independent farmworker union in Washington State’s Familias Unidas por la Justicia (Families United for Justice). The AFL-CIO Solidarity Center and the UFW sent observers to the negotiations between the striking workers and Mexican government representatives.

Much of the interest of US farmworker unions in activity in Mexico, however, concentrates on workers recruited into H-2A guest-worker programs. In the past, farmworker unions opposed the programs on principle, arguing that the workers recruited were vulnerable to extreme employer exploitation, as well as deportation if they struck or protested. Today, though, unions like the UFW and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee argue that they can organize these workers to win contracts, better conditions, and protection for their rights.

This activity can come at a price because the basic sources of exploitation in guest-worker programs remain unchanged. The recruitment system places workers under obligation to recruiters and saddles them with enormous debts. And the ability of workers to stay in the United States, even temporarily, is tied to their employment—that is, if they lose their jobs, they have to leave. Some progressive organizations no longer call for the elimination of guest-worker programs and instead advocate for reforms they say will protect workers’ rights. The vulnerability of guest workers comes from the structure of the programs themselves, however, that create a huge imbalance of power between workers and employers. Unions say that workers under contract have enforceable rights. But guest workers with union contracts are a tiny percentage of all the workers recruited under the programs, and those without contracts remain vulnerable. Even more important, if unions are part of the process in which workers are recruited and contracted to growers, it becomes more difficult for them to act as unions in other ways. If unions recruit guest workers themselves, how can they then strike or use jobsite actions against the employers hiring them?

While some farmworker unions and organizations like the FIOB disagree about guest-worker programs, they do agree about the rights of workers. “Both peoples’ rights as migrants, and their right to stay home, are part of the same solution,” Rivera-Salgado says. “We have to change the debate from one in which immigration is presented as a problem to a debate over rights.”

For many years, the FIOB was a crucial part of the political opposition to Oaxaca’s PRI government, until the PRI was defeated in the elections of 2010. Romualdo Juan Gutierrez Cortez, a schoolteacher in Tecomaxtlahuaca, is now the FIOB’s binational coordinator and its coordinator for Oaxaca; Ezequiel Rosales Carreño formerly headed Oaxaca’s teachers’ union, Section 22 of the National Education Workers Union. Both were leaders of the Popular Association of the People of Oaxaca (Asamblea Popular de los Pueblos de Oaxaca [APPO]).

The June 2006 strike by Section 22 started a months-long uprising, led by the APPO, which sought to remove the state's then governor, Ulises Ruiz, and make a basic change in development and economic policy. The uprising was crushed by federal armed intervention, and dozens of activists were arrested. To Leoncio Vasquez, a FIOB activist in Fresno, "the lack of human rights is a factor contributing to migration from Oaxaca and Mexico, since it closes off our ability to call for any change."

During the conflict, teachers traveled to California from Oaxaca and spoke at the convention of the California Federation of Teachers. Solidarity efforts between US and Mexican teachers have barely started, but with the vast number of Mexican students in California schools, and with many immigrants themselves now working as teachers, the basis is growing for much closer relationships. Mexican teachers, members of Latin America's largest union, have also organized a left-wing caucus that now controls the union structure in several states, including Oaxaca. In Oaxaca, because it helped Gabino Cué get elected governor, the teachers' union was able to get him to approve implementation of an alternative education-reform program designed by teachers and parents, the Project for the Transformation of Education in Oaxaca.

A Trinational Coalition to Defend Public Education (TNCDPE) was organized at a conference in Olympia, Washington, in 1993, the year before NAFTA took effect. "Over time we built a coalition," said María de la Luz Arriaga, professor at Mexico's National Autonomous University and leader of the trinational education alliance, "based on the idea of a solidarity network extended from south to north, breaking with the idea that solidarity means people from the US and Canada supporting their *compañeros* in Mexico. It has to go both ways. And it's not just a coalition of unions, because activists, teachers and researchers also participate, along with parents and students."

In 2005, the British Columbia Federation of Teachers went on a two-week "illegal" strike and, after a judge declared the union couldn't spend any of its funds to support it, Mexican teachers in the TNCDPE created a website the strikers could use when the courts stopped the union from using its own communications media. Rosemary Lee, a longtime Los Angeles activist teacher, emphasizes, "We have similar issues: question of technology and testing; labor law reform in Mexico; charter schools in the US."

During the 2006 uprising, the state government issued an order for Gutierrez's arrest, because he had been a very visible opposition leader already for years. In the late 1990s, he was elected to the Oaxaca Chamber of Deputies, in an alliance between the FIOB and Mexico's left-wing Democratic Revolutionary Party (Partido de la Revolución Democrática [PRD]). Following his term in office, he was imprisoned by then governor José Murat until a binational campaign won his release. His crime was insisting on a new path of economic development that would raise rural living standards and make migration just an option, rather than an indispensable means of survival.

Gaspar Rivera-Salgado believes that "in Mexico, we're close to getting power in our communities on a local and state level." He points to Gutierrez's election as state deputy, and later as mayor of his hometown San Miguel Tlacotepec, and finally to the

election of Gabino Cué as governor. The FIOB's alliance with the PRD is controversial, however. "First, we have to organize our own base," Rivera-Salgado cautions. "But then we have to find strategic allies. Migration is part of globalization, an aspect of state policies that expel people. Creating an alternative to that requires political power. There's no way to avoid that."

FIOB presents an important example of another kind of binational organizing and solidarity that complements efforts by unions. It has a strong base among communities on both sides of the border. It has a carefully-worked-out program for advocating the rights of migrants and their home communities, discussed extensively among its chapters before it was adopted. And it sees the system as the problem, not just the bad actions of employers or government officials.

Conclusion

The interests of workers in the US and Mexico are tied together. Millions of people are a bridge between the two countries and their labor movements. A blacklisted worker in Cananea one year can become a miner in Arizona the next, or a janitor organizer in Los Angeles. Who knows better the human cost of repression in Mexico than a teacher from Oaxaca in 2006, or an electrical worker who lost his or her job and pension in 2009?

Raquel Medina, an Oaxacan teacher, spoke at the 2007 convention of the California Federation of Teachers. She did more than appeal for support for Section 22. She helped teachers from Fresno and Santa Maria understand why they hear so many children in their classrooms speaking Mixteco. She helped them see that the poverty in her home state, the repression of her union, the growing number of Oaxacan families in California, and the activity of those migrants in California's union battles are all related. She connected the dots of solidarity. Educators should go back to their schools and union meetings, she said, and show people the way the global economy functions today—how it affects ordinary people, and what they can do to change it.

The historic slogan of the ILWU (and of people far beyond its ranks) is, "An injury to one is an injury to all." Today, an updated version of it might say, "An attack on a union in Mexico is an attack on unions in the United States." Or it could say, "An attack on Mexican workers in Arizona is an attack on workers in Mexico." Or it could say, "Organizing Mexican workers at car washes in Los Angeles will help unions in Mexico by increasing the power of those willing to fight for Los Mineros and SME."

Note on Sources

In trying to paint a picture of the economic context for events on the border, I've often found that employers in Mexico are not unwilling to provide important information, and some—such as the management of Itapsa, Plásticos Bajacal, Duro Bag, Hyundai, and Grupo Mexico—have stated clearly their position in the labor conflicts in their operations. The maquiladora associations in different regions themselves provide estimates of employment and other useful statistics. Church-based institutions like the Center for Reflection, Education and Action and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility have kept careful track of the living standards of maquiladora workers

in various border cities. I often refer for economic analysis to Alejandro Álvarez Béjar, who teaches in the economics faculty at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Álvarez has spent a lifetime studying the impact of neoliberal economics on Mexican working people. He and his brother Raúl (who passed away in 2014—a student leader in the uprising and massacre of Tlatelolco), have long been widely respected activists in the country's progressive community.

Mexico has the good fortune that newspaper ownership there is still much less concentrated than it is in the United States, and therefore Mexicans enjoy a much greater variety of political points of view than is true among newspapers north of the border, where monopoly is creating a kind of bland ignorance. In particular, *La Jornada*, Mexico City's left-wing daily, is a newspaper with excellent economic reporting and analysis, which is useful for anyone wanting a broad picture of the Mexican economy. While some of the newspapers in the border towns are shrill mouthpieces for local political bosses and their friends who run the maquiladoras and their captive unions, there are some valiant exceptions. Mexican reporters, including Raymundo Ramos at Ciudad Laredo's *El Mañana* and Araceli Domínguez, who covered the Han Young strike for Tijuana's *El Mexicano*, made considerable sacrifices to cover border struggles.

US writers have also made important contributions to spreading an understanding in the north of the complicated history of Mexican labor. First among them is Dan La Botz, not only an activist in democratic movements in the unions of both countries but also the author of the excellent *Mask of Democracy*, a history of the Mexican labor movement up to the early 1990s. Some of the subsequent history is recounted in Dale Hathaway's examination of the crucial relationship forged between the United Electrical Workers and the Authentic Labor Front, in his 2000 book *Allies Across the Border*.

Mexico's labor history is as complex as that of the United States, and the two have many parallels. Both labor movements were strongest in the 1930s and '40s. The main institutions organized in that period—the CIO in the United States and the CTM in Mexico—owe their origins to communists, socialists, and other radicals. In both movements, left-wingers were largely purged from positions of power during the Cold War. An examination of that history is not the purpose of this chapter, which has concentrated on assessing the impact of NAFTA and the border labor war on putting the Cold War to rest. Nevertheless, an honest and open examination of that history—one organized by the formal labor institutions of both countries—is a necessary step in coming to terms with the past, but also in trying to recover a radical vision for the future, capable of inspiring workers to make the sacrifices needed to rebuild each country's labor movement.

In Mexico, democratic and progressive labor activists had a stronger influence on labor's politics and direction than they did in the United States, although they also paid a higher price for their opposition to the government. Some insight into that history, and by implication, into the potential for a movement with much more radical objectives, is found in *Mi Testimonio*, the autobiography of Valentín Campa, the railroad leader and a founder of the CROM. Campa was jailed for years for leading a

national railway strike with Demetrio Vallejo, and he then ran as the Communist candidate for president upon being released from prison.

CHAPTER 8

Working for Global Justice in the New US Labor Movement

Michael Zweig

The AFL-CIO leadership is trying to reorient the domestic labor movement along new lines in an intense battle for survival against increasingly aggressive corporate and government assaults on all aspects of union activity. The federation's September 2013 national convention in Los Angeles marked the official launch of the new approach, best summarized in its Resolution 16, "Building Enduring Labor-Community Partnerships":

> Therefore be it resolved that the AFL-CIO and our affiliates will:
> • Deepen relationships and programs with community;
> • Work vigorously on the issues raised by our partners that reflect our shared values;
> • Ensure that state federations and central labor councils are well situated to build enduring partnerships with community; and
> • Establish ways in which the AFL-CIO can incentivize the development of shared agendas and promote best practices. (AFL-CIO 2013b)

AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka and the federation's leadership realize the importance of representing workers outside the workplace and outside the unions' own workplace-based membership. A profound shift away from the narrow business unionism so characteristic of the AFL-CIO's history, this approach has implications for a renewed approach to foreign policy as well, one that will advance global as well as US economic and social justice.

Josie Camacho, secretary treasurer of the Alameda (California) Labor Council, made the point at the convention while speaking in favor of a resolution calling for international solidarity. She said,

> International labor solidarity is not about charity. It's a strategy for building global working-class power. It is so critical to protecting labor rights and standards internationally. In movements in Iraq, Colombia, Honduras, and many other countries, they're fighting the same fight that we are fighting. . . . When we act in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world we are not only supporting them; we are supporting our own interests because we know that the economy is global, we know that these corporations are global, and we also know that we must stand in solidarity to have a global strong labor movement. (Transcribed by the author from Eisenscher 2013)

The AFL-CIO's new approach directs the labor movement toward a broader, more class-based view of its mission: representing the values and interests of all working people, contributing the muscle organized labor can bring to the battle, no matter the venue, no matter the issue, no matter the organizational form of the fight. It brings to mind the words Tom Joad spoke to his ma in John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* as he fled from an intense police search:

> I'll be ever'where—wherever you look. Wherever they's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there. Wherever they's a cop beatin' up a guy, I'll be there. . . . [W]hy, I'll be in the way guys yell when they're mad an' I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're hungry an' they know supper's ready. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build, why, I'll be there. (1989/1939, 572)

Recent Roots of Change

This new direction did not arise spontaneously or in just the last year or two. The "New Voice" slate that brought John Sweeney to the Federation presidency in 1995, with Richard Trumka at his side, already began to turn away from old methods with its insistence on organizing new workers as the highest union priority. Even then, labor leaders recognized that the decline in union membership and consequent loss of economic and political leverage required urgent efforts to establish a new direction.

Since then, the logic of labor's predicament has led to a number of unprecedented redirections in labor policy, in domestic work as well as international relations. In 2000, the AFL-CIO repudiated its long-standing nativist reaction against immigrant workers and embraced them instead as integral to the US working class, deserving of the protection unions provide and worthy of full integration into American society under revised immigration laws (Bacon 2000).[1] AFL-CIO partnerships with worker centers and other immigrant rights groups have widened and deepened since 2000, including formal cooperation with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and support for the massive May Day marches for immigrant rights in 2006 and subsequent years. In New York City, the Central Labor Council formally accepted the New York Taxi Workers Alliance as its first nonunion-affiliated worker organization and sponsored a revival of May Day as a day for united labor action. At the 2013 convention, New York Taxi Workers Alliance executive director Bhairavi Desai was elected to the AFL-CIO's National Executive Council (NEC).

Meanwhile, in 2003, the Federation established Working America, an organization that mobilizes nonunion members in their communities to engage in political campaigns—electoral and legislative—that advance its goals. In 2010, the AFL-CIO cooperated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and dozens of other organizations to bring tens of thousands of people to Washington, DC, for the One Nation Working Together march, demanding a broad range of social- and economic-justice goals. In 2013, the AFL-CIO renewed its cooperation with the NAACP and others to bring over one hundred thousand people to the fiftieth anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

In another example of coalition building leading up to the 2013 Federation convention, a number of unions across the country joined with the 2011 Occupy movement to plan and carry out marches and rallies in many cities, typically in support of a particular union organizing campaign or contract fight. Unions also provided all sorts of material support to the Occupiers, from supplies to meeting space to financial contributions. When New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg threatened to break up the Occupy Wall Street encampment at Zuccotti Park in mid-October 2011, hundreds of workers from many unions answered their unions' calls to

come to the park at six o'clock in the morning to defend the occupation from police action.

In these and other ways, for nearly two decades, the labor movement has grappled with basic questions touching on the proper scope of the labor movement's interests and the nature of legitimate claims on its attention and resources. While most recent discussions have been limited to domestic organizing, labor's response to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan may signal profound changes in labor's foreign policy as well. Already underway for nearly twenty years, these changes parallel those in its domestic orientation.

In 2005, the AFL-CIO national convention opposed the war in Iraq and called for the rapid withdrawal of all US forces from that country (US Labor Against the War [USLAW] 2005). It was the first time in the Federation's history that it opposed an ongoing US military engagement abroad.

Perhaps most tellingly, the AFL-CIO NEC linked the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan directly to labor's domestic priorities. In the August 3, 2011, statement presenting its agenda for job creation as the centerpiece of public policy, the NEC said,

> If our country is going to have a bright and fair future, we need a completely different direction—toward a high-wage, high-skill, high-productivity economy, driven by investment in our workforce and our infrastructure, and our public services.
>
> There is no way to fund what we must do as a nation without bringing our troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan. The militarization of our foreign policy has proven to be a costly mistake. It is time to invest at home. (AFL-CIO NEC 2011)

Here the NEC does not just call for the end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, itself a radical departure from the history of AFL-CIO support for US wars abroad. It goes deeper into the problem, demanding the end to "the militarization of our foreign policy." Even though the Federation has not repeated this view in subsequent pronouncements, and has not yet acted on its implications, the leadership has recognized and articulated a powerful insight that can guide the Federation and its affiliates in coming years.

Some History

To facilitate possible future developments in labor's campaign for global justice, it is useful to examine the history of labor's foreign policy in much the same way as explicit critiques of past domestic policies have been key to shaping the redirection the Federation is now undertaking.

In the post–World War II era, the Federation's leadership enthusiastically promoted an anticommunist agenda that merged with US Cold War priorities (Morgan 1999). The labor movement became a willing partner to US foreign policy. As Paul Buhle has expressed it, "The aim of AFL-CIO international programs had always been to promote a loyal labor component to the junior partners of US foreign policy and business arrangements. A cautious and highly selective anti-authoritarianism" characterized the AFL-CIO's foreign policy. The labor movement engaged in the same inconsistencies (or, as some might find, the same hypocrisies) as those of US foreign

policy, opposing authoritarian regimes that were not hostile to the Soviet Union while vigorously supporting authoritarian regimes friendly to US interests (Buhle 1999, 225).

The double standard of US and labor foreign policy on issues of democracy and human rights reached perhaps its most obvious height in the 1980s. The AFL-CIO, under the leadership of Lane Kirkland, while championing a free labor movement as a requirement of democracy, cooperated with the US government in their joint support for repressive regimes and anticommunist military forces in Angola, Central America, Chile, the Philippines, and South Korea. All were regimes that ruthlessly suppressed strikes, unions, and the workers who led them. In the cases of Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), Brazil (1964), the Dominican Republic (1965), and Chile (1973), the Federation supported the overthrow of democratically elected governments that had promoted land reform, worker rights, and national control of oil and other natural resources—policies seen as a "communist" threat to US interests. The AFL-CIO opposed apartheid in South Africa, yet it condemned the leading forces within South Africa who were opposing apartheid, the African National Congress and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), as communist-dominated organizations unworthy of support (Buhle 1999, 223–232). Given this record, "leftists sourly labeled the federation 'AFL-CIA'" (Lichtenstein 2002, 248).

The vigor with which Kirkland and the AFL-CIO pursued an anticommunist agenda around the world is reflected in the fact that during the 1980s, a larger share of its budget—heavily subsidized by the US government—went to foreign affairs than to domestic activity, in significant measure to support the Solidarity movement in Poland (Buhle 1999, 226). When Lane Kirkland died in August 1999, the *Wall Street Journal* published an obituary full of praise for him, with the caption under his image stating simply, "Lane Kirkland, Anti-Communist."

That course was set well before Kirkland came to be head of the AFL-CIO in 1979.

George Meany, Federation president from 1952 to 1979 (until 1955 the AFL alone, then the merged AFL-CIO), insisted out of his own conviction that the CIO unions purge leftist influences from their leadership, or expel left-led unions, before he would agree to a merger. And he insisted on being the president of the newly merged Federation, with CIO president Walter Reuther in the vice presidency. Meany staunchly supported the US war in Vietnam and backed US anticommunist policies worldwide. (Reuther and other labor leaders came to oppose the Vietnam War, as we will see below.)

After World War II, under the leadership of William Green and then Meany, the Federation placed labor attachés in US embassies in Europe, in Central and South America, and in countries newly emerging from colonial status. Their purpose was to thwart leftist union activity and promote instead the kind of anticommunist business unionism pioneered by the AFL and favored by the US government. In 1949, aggressively pursuing its own anticommunism, the AFL led the formation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to challenge communist influences in unions around the world. Beginning in 1962, the AFL-CIO established direct organizational ties to the US government through such government-funded

efforts as the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) for Latin America; the Asian-American Free Labor Institute; and the African-American Labor Center.

This orientation for the labor movement did not start with the Cold War. As far back as the Spanish-American War of 1898, in which the United States took control of Cuba, Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, the AFL matched business unionism at home with support for US military intervention abroad. The tradition continued with AFL support for US occupation of Haiti in 1915. The AFL also supported US military action, and sometimes outright occupation, in the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama in the "Banana Wars" beginning in 1912, wars fought to protect the business interests of the United Fruit Company and other US corporations operating in those countries. Opposing the internationalism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the United States after its founding in 1905, the AFL also supported US entry into World War I in 1917 (Buhle 1999, 225; Scipes 2010a, 9–68).

The adoption of Cold War beliefs and policies in labor's foreign affairs in the late 1940s and early 1950s was intimately bound to the purging in those years of the communist and socialist left from local and national leadership in AFL and CIO unions, and the consolidation of business unionism within the labor movement. Both developments, fervently promoted by labor's leaders, involved the acceptance of the bedrock legitimacy, and even exceptional greatness, of American capitalism and its particular political institutions and arrangements.

Yet, ironically, the acceptance of anticommunism and US corporate interests, at home and abroad, helped lay the foundation for the erosion of US manufacturing onward from the late 1970s. Free trade, the construction of global supply chains through off-shoring and outsourcing, unrestricted capital flows, and weaker regulation of corporations—all these developments that now are choking the life out of US workers' living standards—gained momentum with labor largely unaware and unprotected. What appeared to be corporate acceptance of unions as junior partners in empire in the 1950s and 1960s became something else entirely. In later decades, when labor was sufficiently weakened and the alliance no longer beneficial for corporate interests, capital unilaterally discarded its labor partnership.

Breaking with the Past

Waking up to this situation, the labor movement is now coming away from its narrow focus on business unionism. In the face of corporate-dominated globalization, and the many foreign military involvements of the United States undertaken to project and defend that domination, wide sections of the US population, including millions of workers, are increasingly questioning and withholding their support. The time is ripe to look again at the dead end the labor movement came to in foreign affairs and reconstitute a consistently positive relationship with workers around the world. Richard Trumka began to articulate such a redirection shortly after the "New Voice" slate won election to the top leadership of the AFL-CIO in 1995. Speaking at a conference on Labor and the Global Community at the University of California at

Berkeley in November 1996, Trumka said, “For too many years, ideology has been the chief export of the AFL-CIO when it came to international affairs. We’ve changed that and now the chief export and import of the [AFL-CIO International Affairs] department will be a far more precious and relevant commodity, one called ‘international solidarity’” (Banks 1998, 329).

The New Voice slate completely reorganized the Federation’s international structures. AIFLD and related organizations were disbanded. The AFL-CIO opened up cooperative relations with COSATU and the socialist-oriented Central Única dos Trabalhadores in Brazil. The International Department was charged with the responsibility of organizing Federation relations with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the ICFTU (until 2006), the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, the G-20 Labor Summit that coincides with G-20 meetings of finance ministers and central bank governors, and other international organizations in which national labor centers participate. The International Department also guides AFL-CIO communication with the US government in the Federation’s advocacy on trade issues and related policy matters, as well as on behalf of unions in other countries.

In 1997, the Solidarity Center (officially the American Center for International Labor Solidarity) was created to provide technical assistance to labor movements on such questions as collective bargaining processes, gender equality and working women’s rights, and safety practices, especially in emerging economies with little collective bargaining experience. The Solidarity Center does not engage in political advocacy or direct support of strikes, organizing campaigns, or other labor actions. But it assists unions to bolster their capacities for organizing through training and education as workers in other countries confront the marginalization of work, contract labor, and other conditions that complicate traditional collective bargaining.

Even though much of its funding comes from the US government, either indirectly through the National Endowment for Democracy, or directly through specific program grants from the State Department, the Agency for International Development, and the Labor Department, the Solidarity Center and AFL-CIO have moved away from the kind of support for aggressive US foreign policy typical of the Cold War and earlier periods.[2]

Certainly in the case of Iraq, the Solidarity Center has been an effective and helpful ally to unions there as they engage in practical activity on behalf of their members on women’s issues, occupational health and safety, and other workplace organizing. In its support of Iraqi unions, USLAW has found the Solidarity Center and AFL-CIO International Department to be helpful partners. Both the US and Iraqi governments have left in effect the 1987 Saddam Hussein decree that stripped public-sector employees (80 percent of the labor force) of all rights and protections for union activity. Working with USLAW and the Iraqi unions, the Solidarity Center has opposed US actions and addressed the need for Iraqi labor laws consistent with ILO standards. In this, the Solidarity Center reflects new attitudes among AFL-CIO leadership who do not share their predecessors’ commitments to Cold War ideology and unquestioned US military power.

Labor Opposes War

This redirection in labor's foreign policy is a contemporary expression of a long tradition of labor activism that has opposed US foreign policy and its promotion by the labor movement. In the past, opposition to US interventions abroad usually came together with a militant, class-conscious unionism that challenged the principles and practices of business unionism. Today, a new labor foreign policy consistent with global justice can build on these countercurrents. We can reach back to IWW opposition to US participation in World War I, or look at opposition to US entry into the Korean War in 1950, organized by left-led unions that refused to bow down before the anticommunist crusade that marked the then-emerging Cold War.

In more recent history, labor opposition to the Vietnam War grew as the war continued. Opposition spread broadly within the working class, contradicting the standard story that most workers were reactionary Archie Bunker characters typified by the construction workers who famously beat up antiwar protesters in Lower Manhattan in 1970. In fact, by 1967—before the Tet Offensive and Walter Cronkite's famous questioning of the war in his TV news broadcast—over five hundred leaders from fifty unions met in Chicago as the Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace. As within the civilian population, opposition to the war continued to spread among veterans and active-duty soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines—most from working-class backgrounds. In response, increasing numbers of labor leaders began to oppose the war. By 1972, unions had turned thousands of antiwar protesters into the streets (Lewis 2012, 99–115).

In 1981, Jack Sheinkman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers (UAW); William Winpisinger, president of the Machinists Union; and other US union presidents formed the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador. John Sweeney was involved as president of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) before being elected to the presidency of the AFL-CIO. Through the 1980s and early 1990s, in the course of the "dirty wars" the United States supported in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, many union leaders and activists were part of the widespread US solidarity movement with the peoples of Central America (Battista 2002, 419–451; Battista 2008, 122–146).

Many of today's union leaders came of age during the era of the Vietnam and Central American wars. They bring with them that period's distrust of US interventionist foreign policy. More than twenty years after the end of the Cold War, a foundation exists upon which to consolidate and develop a new labor foreign policy. And it would be in step with the challenge to business unionism the Federation leadership is promoting in its new, more class-conscious policies at home. To be sure, the old culture and attitudes persist in a number of unions. And in the absence of the Cold War, which drove labor's foreign policy for decades, the very need for a broad foreign policy may seem remote to some.

Instead of addressing broad aspects of foreign policy typical of the Cold War–era labor movement, unions have recently tended to define relevant foreign affairs in

narrower terms related to international trade agreements, immigration, and tactical cross-border alliances in contract and organizing campaigns. As longtime union organizer Andy Banks wrote after the victory of the New Voice slate, but before 9/11,

> American workers are increasingly focusing their attention internationally. Their concerns are not over threats of war or foreign political domination (if anything, these concerns seem to have diminished since the fall of the Iron Curtain). Their own daily reality gives rise to more concrete international threats: run-away shops; foreign investment by American-based transnational employers which creates greater insecurity at home; and foreign-based transnational employers snatching up local companies, and making coldly-calculated decisions that often spell disaster to the local work force and their communities. (Banks 1998, 330)

But foreign policy involves far more than trade, immigration, and cross-border organizing. While these are vital concerns for working people, the labor movement must also address a wide array of issues that workers and trade unions face abroad. Doing so will engage US workers in solidarity with labor movements and working-class interests around the world, as workers confront diverse challenges.

As Bill Fletcher and Fernando Gapasin have pointed out,

> The union movement generally considers foreign policy on the narrowest of terms—for example, by focusing on the North American Free Trade Agreement—rather than considering its impact on democracy, self-determination, and human rights. . . . The leadership of organized labor (both within the AFL-CIO and within Change to Win) has been profoundly resistant to considering the Global South's view of the United States. Clearly such a review would be a source of discomfort, but it could help US labor leaders understand why many in the Global South are skeptical of the sincerity of US intentions, including those of the US labor movement, on the world stage. (Fletcher and Gapasin 2008, 194, 119)

Even as the labor movement seeks to establish international solidarity in the narrowest tactical terms, it will improve its standing and credibility in the world if it adopts a broader view of cross-border labor solidarity. To promote global justice, the labor movement needs a foreign policy agenda that addresses the following, for example:

- Government-imposed austerity programs and "labor market flexibility" reflecting the demands of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank;
- The structure and control of global manufacturing supply and production chains;
- The free flow of capital across borders while workers remain trapped because of migration restrictions in force around the globe;
- Privatization of public assets and social services;
- US militarized foreign policy and military spending;
- The impact of trade policies on economies, environments, and worker rights and living standards around the world; and
- Protecting working-class activists from heavy fines, jail, and death squads as they organize to protect working people from the harsh effects of corporate domination in all these policy areas.

The AFL-CIO already addresses some of these issues in its organizing and its

representations at G-20 and similar meetings. But the efforts are piecemeal and too often the province of leaders, without membership mobilization or affiliate involvement. A powerful global-justice movement among US workers requires much more.

It's One Economy

As we consider the array of issues in the global-justice agenda, it becomes clear that we in the United States face the same pressures as workers elsewhere. For example, our common concerns emerged in dramatic and surprising ways when USLAW sponsored six Iraqi trade-union leaders on a tour of twenty-six US cities in 2005. In the first-ever encounter between US and Iraqi workers (except on the battlefield), the Iraqis articulated their circumstances and hopes in ways that resonated deeply with their American audiences. In particular, the Iraqis spoke of their efforts to win basic union rights for all Iraqi workers, including those in the public sector whose rights to unionization were taken away by Saddam Hussein in a 1987 decree—the labor policy that was continued by the US occupation force and the Iraqi government it put in place. The Iraqis yearned for a peaceful, democratic, nonsectarian social order and stressed the importance of a free, independent labor movement in securing such a future. They told of their battles to prevent the privatization of Iraqi oil and other national resources. And they explained their opposition to the US war and occupation in their country, which, they explained, undermined every effort to achieve these goals (Center for Study of Working Class Life 2006).

American workers recognized each of these problems in their own lives at home. We battle privatization across the country too. We seek to protect eroding union rights in Wisconsin, Michigan, and many other states by asserting the importance of a vibrant labor movement as the very core of a functioning democracy, just as the Iraqi workers do. Aren't public-sector workers in North Carolina and other states also prohibited from collective bargaining? Don't workers in right-to-work states face legal restrictions on their ability to organize and represent their members? And did we not rise by the millions to oppose the war and occupation in Iraq, out of our own needs as well as out of concern for the Iraqi people?

In the United States, we have a special obligation to confront the militarized foreign policy that the AFL-CIO NEC has warned against. As we join with workers around the world to challenge "free trade," privatization, and the rest of the neoliberal corporate agenda, we should be mindful that US military action, its militarized foreign policy, and its associated intelligence gathering exist to make safe that very same agenda. As we have seen in the case of Iraq, acting in solidarity with workers in other countries requires us to confront US foreign policy and military power, which seek to impose the same conditions that workers elsewhere (and here) organize to resist and overturn.

As we consider the needs of global justice and its demands on US foreign policy in the next few years, it will help to understand that there are not two economies—one domestic, one global; one in South Carolina and California, the other in Guatemala and China. Capitalism is developing into one international structure, one economy

with local features. There is now a globally ever-more-integrated capitalist class harnessing the productive power of workers in almost every country. US foreign policy and its associated military capacities are designed to project American power throughout this global economic network, in defense of US and more general corporate interests and policies that all worker movements oppose, whether within the United States or abroad. This is the basis for international labor solidarity and the foundation and guiding principle of labor's foreign policy.

New Priorities

But our concern to strengthen international solidarity is not just a matter of common cause in common issues. There is also the question of our values and national priorities as expressed in how we finance and spend the federal budget. The United States spends well over half of its federal discretionary budget—not counting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—on the military (National Priorities Project 2013). We have a substantial number of military bases in countries across the globe (Military Travel Zone 2013). We spend more on our military than the next twelve countries in the world combined, including China, France, Germany, Iran, Italy, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the UK (Heeley 2013).

The vast resources devoted to the US military would much better advance the interests of working people in the United States (and around the world) were they instead devoted to the health and education of the American people. We would be better off with the repair and extension of roads, ports, and other infrastructure for our economy, as well as with new environmental protections. Even when considering basic security for the people, it is fair to conclude that true security is best served by making sure people are healthy, well educated, and equipped with advanced economic infrastructure, rather than sacrificing these goals to provide another naval carrier group, another fleet of armed drones, another unnecessary assault on another people.

Labor's foreign policy should address the budgetary aspects of US militarized foreign policy. We need new priorities that reflect the interests and true security of working people. In taking on the military budget, especially the weapons systems involved, the labor movement will have to address the threat such changes would pose to workers with good manufacturing jobs, often unionized.

As we change our national priorities, there will be no easy way to address the dislocations that workers, their unions, and their communities will experience. But one of the most prominent unions in the defense sector, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, has a history of supporting peace and disarmament going back to the leadership of William Winpisinger in the 1970s and 1980s. In 2013, the Connecticut state legislature, with support of the Machinists and other unions, as well as peace and community groups in the state, created the Connecticut Futures Commission on Military Conversion. This commission, which includes representatives of the Connecticut AFL-CIO, as well as peace groups and community representatives, studied the effects of cuts in military procurement and advised the legislature on conversion policies in 2014 (Connecticut State Government 2013; Lowendorf 2013). A similar initiative, also involving unions and the

Metropolitan Washington Council of the AFL-CIO, is under way in Maryland, where labor, peace, religious, and community agencies are joining forces in the Fund Our Communities Campaign to, among other things, create a Commission on Maryland's Future (Fund Our Communities 2014).

Conversion of military to civilian production is only one example of the more general transition required to create a just and sustainable economy. We need conversion from fossil fuel to renewable energy; from low-wage contingent jobs to secure, well-paying employment; from hyperindividualism to mutual regard; from strangled governments serving the needs of their corporate strategists to democratic governments attending the needs of all people; and from an economy that funnels wealth to the very top to one that shares prosperity. All these elements of transition reflect and bolster one another. All require the concentrated attention and political mobilization of working people.

Military conversion study has a substantial history on which to draw. Seymour Melman, an industrial engineer on the Columbia University faculty, pioneered the work in the 1960s and 1970s (Melman 1970a; Melman 1970b). More recently, Miriam Pemberton (2012), a researcher and policy analyst at the Institute for Policy Studies, has begun to design conversion plans at specific plants, working with management, unions, and government agencies. She is also working with members of Congress and their staffs to structure new policies that would address worker adjustments necessary to accompany reductions in the military budget. We may also be guided by Department of Defense studies concerning the wave of base closings in the aftermath of the Cold War in the mid-1990s (Lockwood and Siehl 2004). Of course, a robustly growing economy with a strong manufacturing sector would absorb without special intervention many defense-sector workers in transition, as happens when workers lose their jobs in any shrinking industry within a generally growing economy.

What Solidarity Looks Like

Since the founding of USLAW in 2003, the US labor movement has taken important steps toward a new labor foreign policy. In the process, USLAW has engaged nearly two hundred affiliated union locals, central labor councils, state federations, international unions, and other worker organizations—affiliates from all sections of the labor movement (USLAW 2013). USLAW grew from the bottom up as union members, delegates, and executive leadership debated the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the relevance of the issues to their unions. US workers have hosted Iraqi union leaders on three tours of the United States, signed petitions and contacted members of Congress and US government agencies on behalf of Iraqi unions, and sent money and material aid to Iraqi unions. USLAW has fostered solidarity with Iraqi workers and their unions while addressing the US military budget and conversion issues as a partner in the New Priorities Network (Zweig 2010). While many USLAW affiliates actively pursue its agenda, others support USLAW as a voice for policies they hope will succeed but for various reasons are not ready to champion directly.

USLAW's success demonstrates a desire among union members for taking on US foreign policy as union business, even in opposition to the government in time of war.

This tendency is still in its infancy, however. There is still widespread reluctance to address foreign policy issues, both among the rank and file and union leadership, as the grip of Cold War tradition and narrow business unionism continues to characterize most of the labor movement.

But the prospect of change is already visible. While debates have been focused on Iraq and Afghanistan, and more recently on federal budget priorities and conversion, the underlying principles of USLAW's work suggest a broader and deeper reorientation of labor's foreign policy. USLAW's mission statement makes no explicit reference to Iraq or Afghanistan. It casts the organization's purpose and activities in more general terms that, despite uneven responses and continuing resistance in many unions, might provide a foundation and guide to a broader approach to labor's foreign policy, based in worker education and bottom-up organizing (USLAW 2012).

There are many examples of international labor solidarity practiced within the US labor movement. In one of its forms, unions have developed international ties connected to specific organizing and contract campaigns (Bronfenbrenner 2007). As this is written, the UAW, for example, is working closely with German unions to support the UAW's organizing campaigns at a Volkswagen plant in Tennessee (Cremer 2013). At the same time, the autoworkers are trying to organize a Nissan assembly plant in Canton, Mississippi, reaching out for international support to unions engaged with Nissan in Brazil, France, Japan, and South Africa (Greenhouse 2013). The United Steelworkers have connected with German unions to support the USW organizing drive at ThyssenKrupp in Alabama, an echo of the USW's much larger international campaign in the late 1990s to challenge the power of Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation in West Virginia (Bronfenbrenner and Juravich 2000; United Steelworkers 2012). The Teamsters mobilized workers in ten ports around the world in support of locked-out IKEA workers in Richmond, British Columbia (International Brotherhood of Teamsters 2013). The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) has organized in the Mexican towns from which people come to the United States to work in the fields and processing plants in North Carolina and other places where FLOC organizes in the United States. In 2000, Longshoremen in Charleston, South Carolina, successfully organized an international labor response to Maersk's attempt to break the International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422 there (Erem and Durrenberger 2008; Labor Video Project 2011).

Operating with a wider perspective, a number of unions, some active in USLAW, have undertaken a broader approach to the international solidarity agenda, with practices that often preceded their opposition to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. For many years, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) has been closely involved with the Frente Auténtico del Trabajo (Authentic Labor Front) and other independent Mexican unions, as well as nurturing connections with workers in the Philippines and elsewhere (UE International Department 2014). These activities have not been connected with any immediate contract campaign but represent a commitment to helping workers elsewhere increase their power and dignity. Similarly, the Communications Workers (CWA) and the Steelworkers have organized solidarity with Colombian unions plagued by death squads. The Steelworkers have opposed US

foreign policy as expressed in Plan Colombia (Communications Workers of America 2003; Hall 2012). The Steelworkers have also acted in solidarity with Mexican miners locked in a difficult battle with Grupo Mexico, unrelated to any specific Steelworker campaign in the United States (La Botz 2010). The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has worked with labor-religion coalitions in solidarity with Mexican workers in the maquiladoras along the US-Mexican border and has promoted purchases of "fair trade" coffee and chocolate. SEIU, especially its health and hospital workers' Local 1199, has a history of solidarity with Venezuelan and Central American unions.

All these examples indicate a significant potential for the development of a coherent labor foreign policy that promotes global justice. Yet, at the 2013 AFL-CIO national convention, the leadership refused to consider resolutions that expressed more than a general commitment to international solidarity. Despite the call of the NEC in 2011 to end US militarized foreign policy, delegates considered no resolution addressing the imminent threat of war with Syria, which the Obama administration was at that time preparing. On the whole, there had been little preparation at the rank-and-file level and among Federation affiliates to set the stage for such a decision at the convention. So delegates engaged in no debate on American foreign policy and declined to consider any resolution that called for new priorities in federal spending that would reduce the military budget and move the money to pay for urgent domestic needs.

The convention referred back to the AFL-CIO NEC all three resolutions submitted by affiliates that addressed the question of priorities. For example, the Alameda Labor Council, after setting out a number of facts of US military spending and its material costs—pointing out that there is no military solution to terrorism, which is best dealt with through diplomatic and police means and asserting that "true national security must include security in people's health, education, employment, retirement, food and environment, as well as a functioning modern infrastructure to support sustainable economic activity"—went on to urge the AFL-CIO to call for the end of the war in Afghanistan by the end of the year (a full year in advance of President Obama's timetable). The resolution called for a change in national budget priorities; devotion of federal funds to conversion; building up the manufacturing sector of the economy; and, perhaps most important, urged "that the AFL-CIO will undertake an educational campaign on these issues among its affiliates and seek to involve its affiliates in the political tasks necessary to implement this resolution in public policy" (Alameda Labor Council 2013). This and related resolutions (South Central [Wisconsin] Federation of Labor 2013; Wisconsin State AFL-CIO 2013) were referred back to the NEC.

The convention expressed solidarity with the Iraqi labor movement in its efforts to secure a new labor law consistent with ILO standards. It also expressed solidarity with Hassan Juma'a Awad, president of the Iraqi Federation of Oil Unions (IFOU), in his legal battles arising from his leadership in confronting Iraqi authorities in the oil sector (AFL-CIO 2013c).

In a more general vein, the convention adopted a resolution that suggested a basis for international solidarity in the common circumstances US workers face with others around the world in a single global capitalist economy. The resolution embraced both

forms of solidarity we have seen that have emerged in the practice of Federation affiliates, and the Federation itself, in recent years—cross-border organizing and support for labor rights more generally. The resolution specified a series of actions to which the Federation committed itself that follow from this understanding: building international strategic alliances, defending ILO standards, addressing the problems arising from part-time and informal work arrangements around the globe, and constructing bargaining strategies with global partners to address global supply chains (AFL-CIO 2013a).

A New Union Culture

Establishing a new labor foreign policy is of course not simply a question of what resolutions can pass at union conventions. Having made these commitments, the Federation needs to develop them programmatically. It can popularize and provide financial support for best practices among its affiliates. More generally, and more important, the Federation and the labor movement as a whole must create a new culture, one that engages its members in the work of international solidarity and its related requirement to address US social priorities at home as expressed in politics and the federal budget.

Changing union culture to alter labor's foreign policy and deepen its international solidarity can reinforce the cultural changes required of the new direction in its domestic aspect—and vice versa. The changes required in both aspects of the labor movement involve several related elements. First, union leadership must develop a broader vision of labor's agenda, going far beyond (but not giving up) workplace organizing for better terms and conditions of employment. The new emphasis on community alliances adopted at the 2013 AFL-CIO convention opens up this conversation, which needs to be taken into the realms of foreign policy and military spending as well. In doing so, the labor movement needs to closely link the two realms of its work, domestic and international, recognizing that we are involved in a single global economy.

A second requirement to develop is the active education of union members. Too often, overwhelmed by the demands of organizing and constrained by increasingly limited finances, unions (and the Federation itself) have closed down their education departments. This is a crippling development that must be reversed. As Hector Figueroa, president of New York City building maintenance and staff workers' SEIU Local 32B, has warned, it is not enough to treat solidarity as a one-way street in which US unions seek assistance from abroad in US contract and organizing campaigns. "The AFL-CIO must educate leaders, international staff, and members about the importance of understanding the conditions that workers and trade unions face abroad" (Figueroa 1998, 306). Unless unions educate their members about how the economy and politics work, how the domestic and the international arenas are tightly intertwined, how the labor movement must relate to the needs and movements of working people everywhere, members will not understand what they and their unions must do to advance their interests in practical ways. Effective leadership cannot simply rely on issuing calls to action of one sort or another with the expectation that

members will hop to. To lead, leaders must educate the rank and file, training them as social analysts and activists.

This suggests a third element of union culture required for a labor revival—bottom-up member activity and the democratic norms that allow for member initiatives. Building real and meaningful solidarity between unions and other community groups, and with global movements of working people, cannot possibly succeed without the active engagement and imagination of rank-and-file workers. Neither resolutions nor top-down micromanaging of local activity can create the labor movement we need. The scope and complexity of the tasks require broad participation. To translate resolutions into realities, union members need the freedom to conceive and initiate a variety of coalitions and solidarity campaigns. These will be more effective as workers become more aware of the play of forces shaping their lives, knowledge that comes from appropriate labor education and leadership training.

In this regard, the experience of USLAW is instructive. The organization, initiated by fewer than one hundred activists in the run-up to the start of the Iraq War in early 2003, grew as members of union locals brought the question of war to their fellow members, delegates, and executive boards. Resolutions passed after intense debate involving education about the war, about Iraq, about terrorism, and about foreign policy. As locals affiliated with USLAW, they brought resolutions opposing the war to central labor councils and to sister locals in the same international union. As several locals within a single union affiliated, they brought resolutions and debate to their national conventions. As we have seen, USLAW brought Iraqi union leaders to the United States in 2005 to deepen the education process. Later in 2005, the AFL-CIO national convention opposed the Iraq War only after central labor councils and state federations around the country submitted eighteen resolutions to the convention, calling for the rapid or immediate withdrawal of all US forces from Iraq. This result, and the subsequent continued growth of USLAW and labor opposition to the war in Afghanistan after 2009, could only have resulted from bottom-up organizing, democratic debate, and creative movement building based in the rank and file of affiliated locals. Support for the IFOU, organized by USLAW and provided in significant measure by the Solidarity Center, helped provide the stability to make it possible by 2007 for the IFOU to be “a major player on the national stage” in its resistance to privatization of Iraqi oil (Muttitt 2012, 190).

Labor’s Strategic View

To contribute to the functioning of a democratic society, the labor movement, from the leadership down to the rank and file and back up again, has to address all aspects of these questions: What kind of a society do we want to live in? What kind of a role do we want the United States to play in the world? How can international labor solidarity challenge the world system corporate leaders are establishing through the World Trade Organization, Trans-Pacific Partnership, and other supranational forms of global governance capital constructs? In both arenas, domestic and international, the labor movement has to take on a basic aspiration and responsibility: to help provide overall strategic guidance, and huge numbers of people, to the social movements and political

processes that will secure a just society that serves the needs of working people. Nothing less will bring to bear the power required to push back the power capital has deployed in recent decades. Nothing less can reverse the policies under which workers have suffered repeated defeats, at home and abroad.

No single organization can guide and mobilize the working class to be the coherent force it must become if the corporate agenda is to be defeated and replaced with a different set of priorities and policies. But unless working people find a way to gather themselves into a coherent force of many tens of millions in the United States and many hundreds of millions worldwide, the corporate agenda will continue to prevail.

Working people surely have different answers to the complex problems they face than the ones provided by corporate titans. The fact of these deep differences suggests that the labor movement needs to develop a new culture of independent labor politics. What form that will take, what consequences it will have for labor's connections to the Democratic Party, will emerge as the labor movement grows into the agenda it has begun to establish at the 2013 AFL-CIO convention.

The Wagner Act prohibits management from interfering in the internal affairs of unions, recognizing that labor and capital have antagonistic interests. Yet there is no such understanding when it comes to politics. While AFL-CIO leadership may have broken away from a full identity with "the national interest" and begun to think of the country as divided by deep class differences, the leadership has not yet made a similar assessment of the Democratic Party and the corporate-dominated two-party political process in which we are all enmeshed. Coming to grips with this issue will require some deep rethinking of long-held political assumptions.

One service the labor movement provides is a context in which activists and leaders can meet to compare notes and learn from one another's analyses and experiences. Every labor convention provides such opportunities. When assessing the needs of global justice and political dynamics in capitalist countries, US unions need to place their own experiences in an international context.

They need to engage in education and outreach about the experience and analysis of workers in other countries, lessons that have implications we need to absorb for our own organizing, lessons that elude us if we do not see ourselves as partners, and act as partners, with working people worldwide. How have unions in Germany helped to secure living standards for their members that exceed our own? How do French unions mobilize millions into political power that can shape public policy? How did Tunisian and Egyptian unions contribute to the Arab Spring? How have unions in South America participated in a leftward political movement that has challenged neoliberal programs and US corporate power on their continent? What have been the experiences of unions in Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain in the aftermath of the financial crisis and austerity agenda imposed in their countries? Why have some gains been reversed? Grappling to create a new labor foreign policy that promotes global justice will bring US workers and their leaders into contact with much deeper realms of experience, questions we will have to address as we vie with capital for power on a social scale.

We have seen that a number of unions have already begun to express a foreign policy that more fully represents the interests of their members and working people in

general. The CWA, Steelworkers, SEIU, and UE have led in this regard. Within the AFT, where twenty-eight locals are affiliates of USLAW, USLAW is now an officially recognized interest-group caucus of the national union—quite a change from the days of the AFT's vehement anticommunist foreign policy.

These unions, with USLAW and its affiliates, can perhaps become the nucleus of a freshly organized, coordinated force within the labor movement for a new foreign policy. Redefining labor's foreign policy must be integral to the reorientation of the labor movement as a whole. The context, history, and institutional capacity for this purpose are at hand.

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NOTES

Introduction

1. The point about unevenness is very important. It means that these processes affect countries differentially, and they can hit at different times, with different intensities, and so forth. In fact, they can affect different regions in the same countries differentially.

This must be understood: globalization is *not* a single monolithic force sweeping the globe, like a tidal wave, affecting each social order, region, economy the same way at the same time. It is a series of processes that lead to "more intensive interaction across wider spaces and shorter time than before" (Nederveen Pieterse 2015, 8), but its timing and impact are uneven.

2. Charles Tilly (2005) agrees with this long-term understanding: "Starting with the movement of humans out of Africa some fifty thousand years ago, humanity has globalized repeatedly." He then discusses three waves of globalization that have taken place since 1500.

3. Nederveen Pieterse (2008) examines the decline of the United States in considerable detail; see also Scipes 2009. Needless to say, there is a growing number of other works on this issue, but the best overview I have seen is Fraser 2015, 341–374.

4. This section on "neoliberal economics" draws heavily on my previous work—see particularly Scipes 1984, 2009—but has been supplemented by extensive additional readings, particularly by Brenner (2003), Harvey (2005), Piven (2004), Roman and Velasco Arregui (2013), and Swarts (2013).

5. One of the great myths of American life—propagated heavily by business, government, and the mainstream media—is that as economic productivity increases in the country, our standard of living automatically rises. This "suggests" that business "takes care" of its workers economically by periodically enhancing workers' pay.

   The reality is that it has been the trades unions, through negotiations and through striking, that forced business to raise wages and extend social benefits. And even nonunion workplaces have generally raised wages/benefits to comparable levels as part of their campaign to keep their workers from unionizing. In short, and following Jack Metzgar (2000), the "working middle class"—which includes members of the skilled trades, unionized industrial workers, and later, public-sector workers—was created by the labor movement, and they joined the traditional "middle-class" occupations like lawyers, doctors, insurance agents, etc., to create the "great American middle class." The "working middle class" was not created by the mythical "benign" efforts of business; it was created by the power of workers from the 1940s to the early 1970s.

6. Every year, the federal government establishes a budget, saying it plans for certain programs and the costs to finance them, and then it will pay for them out of tax receipts. After the end of the budgetary year—which currently ends on September 30—the government will report that "we overspent our budget" (reporting a deficit) or "we brought out budget in lower than expected" (reporting a surplus). Then that year's result (surplus or deficit) is added to that of every other year, going back to 1789, when the United States became an independent country, and that cumulative total of surplus/deficit is known as the "national debt." Today, as stated, the national debt exceeds $18.1 trillion.

7>. A key way this has been done is through mythologizing history: a perfect counter-example is provided by the film *Sir, No Sir!* (Zieger 2005). Despite herculean efforts to "put the [Vietnam] war behind us," David Zieger brilliantly reports the existence of and the impact on the US military's ability to fight the war by an antiwar movement *within* the US military.

Comparing Zieger's film to the "history" of the war, as is generally reported, shows how much the "real history" has been mythologized. Nick Turse's 2013 book on Vietnam, *Kill Anything That Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam*, also demonstrates the mythology of the war that has been propagated by the US government, and then destroys it by use of official US Army records.

8. For an excellent discussion of corporate propaganda, see Carey 1997. (Thanks to Michael Barker for drawing my attention to this work.)

9. Nixon didn't pass these progressive laws, especially around the environment and health and safety laws for workers, because he believed in them, but instead to undercut the progressive movement (including the anti–Vietnam War movement) that had forced him to address these issues in this manner.

10. Most of the world uses the term "nongovernmental organizations"; in the United States they are generally referred to as "nonprofit" organizations.

11. These examples are each from the United States. Obviously, there would be a considerable number more if we had collected examples from around the world.

12. The TUCP was supported by the Asian American Free Labor Institute (AFFLI), the Asian regional affiliate of the AFL-CIO. In fact, as I reported, based on a 1989 account in *International Labour Reports*, the AFL-CIO channeled over $5.7 million between 1983 and 1988 to oppose the KMU. "This amount is greater than that sent to any other country during this period." (Scipes 1996, 251, note 9); in the same period, Poland's Solidarność received $3,631,913 (*International Labour Reports*, 1989).

13. Terminology over types and forms of trade unionism, particularly in North America, has gotten terribly confused over the past twenty years. In my article (Scipes 2014d), I took a global and historical approach to the subject, trying to disentangle this theoretical confusion. Relevant to this argument herein, I argued that unions in North America that previously—and incorrectly—had been identified as "social-movement unions" should be labeled as "social-justice unions." These social-justice unions are the ones I am referring to herein.

Since this article is available online, I have not incorporated references herein—please see the original article.

14. All of this has been extensively documented in my book, Scipes 2010a. For subsequent writings, see Scipes 2010b, 2012, and 2015b.

15. Since this is discussed in my first chapter in this volume (Scipes 2016a, note 34), it is not necessary to repeat here.

16. Although I do not know much about Bangladesh, one related and very interesting article on addressing child labor is Brooks 2005.

Chapter 1

1. I am an American trade unionist, long-time activist, and labor scholar who has been trying to build global labor solidarity with working people and their organizations around the world for over thirty years. I have written this from my position in the United States simply because it is the case I know the best, and because I think the US perspective is important, while arguing it is only one of a number of perspectives worthy of consideration. I hope this will be joined subsequently by analyses and writings from multiple other perspectives. One already published perspective, which is quite interesting, is Roman and Velasco Arregui 2013. Another is McIlroy and Croucher 2013.

While the emergence and developments of labor movements are important in and of themselves for their expansion of popular democracy in the workplace and limiting exploitation and oppression of workers, I know of five situations in which labor movements played a key role,

if not *the* leading role, in overthrowing dictatorships and expanding democracy across the respective society over the past thirty years: Philippines 1986 (see Scipes 1996); Brazil 1987 (see Sluyter-Beltrão 2010); South Korea 1987 (see Koo 2001); Poland 1989 (see Bloom 2014); and South Africa 1990 (see Baskin 1990). Regardless of subsequent developments, the role of these labor movements in the fight for democracy has been exemplary and should be recognized by scholars.

2. In the United States, we have been told that there is only one kind of democracy: the idea of one person, one vote; that everyone has an equal say in public decision making; and that when an issue affects them, every person who wants to speak on the issue can so do. William I. Robinson (1996), based on earlier work by Robert Dahl, calls this "popular democracy," and he counterposes it against "polyarchal democracy," which means there are *two types* of democracy, not just one.

Polyarchic democracy—also referred to as "elite" democracy, or constrained democracy—is where only a few elite people get to define the situation and select possible candidates for an electoral position, and then "ordinary" people are allowed to choose, but only from the possible options established by these elites (see Scipes 2010a, 191–192, note 10).

Here, I'm talking about popular democracy.

3. *WorkingUSA*, vol. 17, no. 2, June 2014: 141–288.

4. While I have been teaching at Purdue University North Central since August 2004, one of the things I have produced is the most complete online bibliography of contemporary labor writings of which I am aware. This contains over one hundred pages of bibliographical entries, including writings not only of academics but of labor activists as well, and includes some material from other countries. It is episodically updated, albeit irregularly. My "Contemporary Labor Issues" bibliography is online and free at http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/laborbib.htm.

In July 2016, Purdue University North Central (PNC)—where I work—is to unify with Purdue University Calumet, and the resulting university name will be Purdue University Northwest or PNW. The reader should be able to use URLs with PNC in them, and they should be directed to the new pages; if a URL has PNC in it, and it no longer works, trying replacing it with PNW. Otherwise, put the name of the article or document in Google and see if it comes up.

5. Peter Waterman (2001, 312–315) has discussed also the lack of innovation in the ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), which was the dominant international trade-union confederation between 1949 and 2006, a "Western"-oriented and anticommunist international collection of national labor centers. Waterman implies that this lack of innovation applies to all established global trade union organizations. [In November 2006, the ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labor, another confederation, merged to become the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC): I presume his comments remain generally relevant —KS.]

One Global Union Federation (GUF—formerly known as International Trade Secretariats) that has shown innovativeness and initiative has been the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), developing its International Action Day program around health and safety issues for not only its bus, truck, and railroad workers but also for the public. For an inspiring account, see Urata 2011: "An impressive feature of this campaign is the mobilization of the rank-and-file members, often en masse, to rallies and demonstrations. Altogether, unions in some 70 countries have taken part in such actions" (67).

6. See US Labor Department, Union Members 2014, January 23, 2015, online at www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm.

7. See Bluestone and Harrison 1982; Harrison and Bluestone 1988; detailed in particular struggles, for example, in Ashby and Hawking 2009; Rhomberg 2012.

Roman and Velasco Arregui (2013, 6–15) detail the corporate attack on working people: "The rise and triumph of the corporate neo-liberal agenda did not simply happen because of 'market forces' or 'globalization.' The most powerful corporations in the US—many of them the most powerful in the world—organized to make it happen; they developed their own consensus and mobilized their vast resources and networks to make it happen" (7). This specifically included attacking the National Labor Relations Board.

8. Andrew Herod (1995, 343–346) discusses the literature about the shift of capital offshore through his critical evaluation of "Workerless Theories of the Geography of FDI" (foreign direct investment). For an early discussion of the "Changing International Division of Labor," see Frobel, Heinrichs, and Kreye 1980 and Southall 1988. See also Scipes 1984. For a more recent study, see Scipes 2009.

Stanley Aronowitz has been especially prescient over the years about the impact of technology on jobs and working people. See Aronowitz and DiFazio 2009; Aronowitz 2014.

9. See, among others, Aronowitz 2014; Bluestone and Harrison 1982; Early 2009, 2013; Fletcher and Gapasin 2008; Goldfield 1987; Greenhouse 2008; Harrison and Bluestone 1988; Scipes 1984, 2009.

10. For one of the most trenchant criticisms of the US labor movement and its leaders, see Aronowitz 2014.

Herod (1995, 348–358) discusses in detail the innovative global campaign organized by United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 5668 of Ravenswood, West Virginia, the national USWA, the Industrial Union Department (IUD), and the AFL-CIO against union busting by the Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation. This certainly shows vision, imagination, and leadership, especially by the USWA and the IUD. See also Bronfenbrenner and Juravich 1999. This quality of formal leadership has been incredibly rare in the US labor movement, especially over the past forty years.

Herod (2001) revisits the Ravenswood campaign and compares it to the struggles by United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 659 in Flint, Michigan, which shut down extensive amounts of production by General Motors, to see what would be revealed by comparing the two different cases.

Herod is one researcher in the United States who has worked diligently to show American workers and their unions that by careful examination of corporate production chains they can find weaknesses upon which they can attack corporate power. Herod's work—1995, 2000, 2001, 2003—has been exemplary in trying to show the power of workers in affecting global capital operations and in understanding the need to find "sites" within the global production system—despite the onslaught of "globalization"—upon which workers can act.

11. For a detailed discussion of the inadequacy of the elite-dominated Democratic Party, see Street 2014. Aronowitz (2014) discusses labor's self-subordination to the Democratic Party, and how that has hurt working people.

This point becomes even stronger after watching President Obama work with Republican leadership to garner "fast-track" authority, so that when presented, his Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) can only get an "up or down" vote from Congress, precluding any modifications or changes (Weisman 2015; see also Baker 2015). The TPP is widely seen as a gift to the global corporate world, at the direct cost of American workers—and, I would add, workers across the world.

12. Richard Hyman (2011) wrote a very interesting chapter on "Trade Unions, Global Competition and Options for Solidarity" in *Global Restructuring, Labour and the Challenges for Transnational Solidarity*, a book I just recently discovered (Bieler and Lindberg eds., 2011). Hyman does not discuss "business unionism," for he focuses on European unions, but

his thinking is of considerable importance for North American unionists. He argues that supporters of unions—especially labor activists, leaders, and labor scholars—need to transform our unions so they can adequately represent the members today, who he suggests are quite different from trade unionists in the past. “My argument is that trade unions need to redefine, indeed reinvent, their understandings of solidarity; and to do so, they need to rediscover how to behave proactively and strategically” (Hyman 2011, 19).

Hyman then discusses how to operate strategically: “A theme . . . has been that trade union strategic capacity can be, and needs to be, enhanced through internal dialogue, discussion and debate” (24). He then argues that “unions must turn (or return) to a self-conception as organizations campaigning for rights and engaging in ‘contentious politics.’ . . . This involves an assertion of unions’ identity as a ‘sword of justice’ . . . : contesting oppression, inequality and discrimination” (25).

Ultimately, he’s arguing that we must *internally* transform our unions: “If interests are to be conceived and redefined in ways which highlight complementaries and encourage new solidarities, the bureaucratic, hierarchical politics characteristic of much traditional trade unionism must give way to more participative, interactive processes. For unions to survive and thrive, the principle of solidarity must not only be redefined and reinvented; workers on the ground must be active participants in this redefinition and reinvention” (29).

Further discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter, although it is a continuing theme in the “labor revitalization” literature since 1995—see my “Contemporary Labor Issues” bibliography at http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/laborbib.htm. However, having done considerable work myself on the relationship between labor leaders, activists, and union members—and comparing these factors between two different unions (Scipes 2003)—I think Hyman’s chapter is rich, important, and deserving of serious consideration and reflection.

13. To get a better idea of what this means, see Stanley Aronowitz’s recent biography of the macrosociologist C. Wright Mills (Aronowitz 2012).

14. This understanding—incorporating individual choice into macro level analysis—is a crucial aspect of my Polyconflictual Model of Society. See Scipes 2010a, 130–150 for elaboration.

15. An example to illustrate my point. For most of the time that the United States was at war with Vietnam, the United States drafted young men into the military. This, obviously, affected those drafted (while affecting those not drafted, albeit in very different ways). The draft also affected parents and grandparents, spouses, significant others, and friends, as well as the children (when present) of those drafted. Thus, US engagement at a global level affected individuals and their personal networks of family and friends all across the United States, not to mention millions of Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians.

16. While the United States has tried to dominate the world, it has not always been successful. Politically, the first major challenge after World War II was the Bandung Conference in Indonesia during 1955, where a number of third world countries sought to escape control of both the US and the Soviet empires. Obviously, a number of countries won their independence through armed struggles—particularly China, Cuba, and Vietnam—and have paid terrible prices for their “ungratefulness.” (For Vietnam, see Turse 2013.) And subsequent development has been “uneven,” at best.

After the collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1989 and the Soviet Union itself in 1991, the United States was referred to as “the sole superpower.” In political science terms, global power relations were referred to as a “unipolar” world.

Fallout from the “quagmire” of Iraq and later Afghanistan, and later the US defeats, has included the emergence of a number of countries—most notably those referred to collectively as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa)—who individually at times but

sometimes together seek to impede or ultimately surpass US power at a global level. This period—shifting from a unipower to a multipower world—is inherently dangerous, as the declining imperial power (the United States) seeks desperately to defeat this challenge.

17. Having taught at the university level in Northwest Indiana for over ten years—and Northwest Indiana is not a center of progressive thought—I have found that whenever I ask my students whether the United States should try to dominate the world or take care of our people, they almost always choose unanimously to take care of our people.

18. This section is drawn from the preface of Scipes 2010a, xxv–xxvi.

19. This point could be debated, as many Marxists have a broader understanding of imperialism than mere economics. However, on a theoretical basis, I argue that Lenin's approach is economistic, and it is on a theoretical basis that this is being discussed here. In other words, in practice, the conceptualization has not been so limited, but practice has extended beyond what the theory includes.

20. In fact, Nederveen Pieterse's conceptualization allows us to speak of labor imperialism in theoretical terms for the first time. It is in recognizing that domination can take place at a level *below* nation-state domination that allows labor's across-political-community-borders domination to be included within the concept of imperialism. I present a theory of labor imperialism as a way to show what we do not want to take place (Scipes 2014a, 145–147; see also Scipes 2010b, 2015b).

21. In what are generally referred to as "settler" colonies—the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Israel—Europeans simply invaded and "settled" (that is, conquered) indigenous peoples' lands. Initially acting as imperialist colonizers, these settlers eventually established their own nation-states on the backs and the bodies of the indigenous; these new nation-states were thus imperialist from their respective "founding." At least in these new nation-states, their "development" differed from traditional imperialist activities in that they did not take things away from each colonized land; they just stole them and the land itself, using it for the interest and advantages of the "settlers" themselves. Most of these settler countries, in turn, expanded outward themselves, becoming imperialist in the sense highlighted by Nederveen Pieterse (1989).

22. With the single exception of Japan, itself imperialist, the imperialist countries were populated overwhelmingly by whites, and certainly led by whites, and they plundered countries populated by peoples of color. This racial component of imperialism must be recognized.

    To my knowledge, of all the developing countries in the world, only three—Ethiopia, Iran (formerly known as Persia), and Thailand (Siam)—were never colonized by the imperialist countries.

23. The importance of this to the colonized countries can be seen by asking counterfactual questions: Had the Europeans and Americans not stolen approximately fifteen million Africans from that great continent (along with their descendants over the centuries), would the countries of Africa likely be in the shape they are in today? How about had California—something like the sixth most economically powerful "country" in the world today—remained part of Mexico?

24. This literature on developing countries is voluminous. For an extensive yet partial online bibliography, go to http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/Course_references.htm#SOCIOLOGY_OF_DEVELOPING_CO

This offshore transfer of investment and ultimately production by US corporations—to counter increased global economic production (that is, competition)—has hurt US workers, both by eradicating jobs and by threatening the loss of remaining jobs in the face of unionization efforts, while reducing wage-hike pressures (Bronfenbrenner 2000). By 2003, estimates of job

loss due to NAFTA were 879,280 (Scipes 2009, 23, citing Scott 2003, 3); by 2007, estimates of job loss due to free trade with China totaled 2,166,000 (Scipes 2009, 39, note 13, referring to Scott 2007). Many American workers, as well as the AFL-CIO itself, blamed foreign workers for "stealing their jobs," a project I denounced (2006), and I argued blame should be properly placed on US corporate managements. For arguably the fullest account to publication date, examining the changing global economy and its effects on the United States, see Scipes 2009. A quick look at the website of the Economic Policy Institute finds that this same researcher reports that since China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, the US trade deficit with China has cost the United States 3.2 million jobs, with 2.4 million of these lost in manufacturing (Scott 2014).

25. As these countries continue to develop economically, they are demanding equal access to the greater US market through free trade agreements in exchange for politically accepting the lead of the United States in world affairs. To date, this has been an agreeable exchange to US elites, even though it increases competition within the US markets, helping to undercut jobs for American workers.

26. Another labor movement that played an important role in political developments is Poland's Solidarność. Since Poland has a totally different dynamic and is now part of the European Union, I decided not to discuss their efforts herein; nonetheless, their impact should be noted. For an excellent recent monograph on Solidarność, see Bloom 2014.

27. Peter Evans (2010) discusses the expanded possibilities opened up by globalization, offering a counter-narrative to those who see top-down globalization as only a disaster for labor. Evans discusses a number of campaigns in the 1990s, arguing that even defeats have contributed to "institutional learning" for the labor movement. He suggests that globalization has caused the AFL-CIO to reconsider its historic "labor imperialism"—arguing my (Scipes 2010a) views are now in the minority—and that "viewed in a historical lens, the current level of solidarity between North American unions and their Latin American counterparts is extraordinary" (Evans 2010, 366).

Ronaldo Munck (2010), writing at roughly the same time as Evans, generally agrees:

> Globalization clearly signaled the end of "business as usual" by the labour movement, and has generated a whole range of innovative responses. This flourishing of innovation has been seen at the local, national, regional, and global levels. Sometimes the turn has been pragmatic and sometimes advances have only been partial. . . . However, we could now in the main agree that globalization has opened up as many doors as it has closed for labour.

In a subsequent article, Evans argues that "the fierce attacks on labor . . . have stimulated the emergence of new transnational perspectives and strategies in the US labor movement" (Evans 2014, 260). He discusses a number of transnational labor campaigns carried out by US unions in conjunction with "Southern" unions. He also notes the changing role and increasing importance of Southern unions in transnational alliances. He refers to these changes in the title of his article: "Global Labor's Evolving Architecture Under Neoliberalism."

For more on changing relations between labor movements in the Americas, see Collombat 2011; for a very interesting collection of case studies on "transnational" solidarity, see Bieler and Lindberg eds., 2011.

28. This following section, discussing Waterman's thinking, is based on Scipes 2014a, 147–148.

29. Thus, Waterman (1998) sees the internationalism of workers to be in parallel with the internationalism of women, students, peasants, etc., ultimately arguing that each should join with the others to create a better world.

30. David Featherstone (2012, 5) defines solidarity "as a relation forged through political struggle which seeks to challenge forms of oppression." He sees these relations as transformative.

Further, he writes,

> Solidarity has often been understood as being about likeness. This approach obscures the importance of solidarities in constructing relations between places, activists, diverse social groups. This can involve the cementation of existing identities and power relations. It can, however, as frequently be about the active creation of new ways of relating. (Featherstone 2012, 5)

31. Rob Lambert and Eddie Webster (2001) discuss the situation where Australian workers, in a dispute with a state government in 1995, were supported by boycott threats by workers in COSATU in South Africa and by workers in CITU (Center of Indian Trade Unions) in India. They write, "Here was solidarity of historical import, for it was possibly the first time ever that seriously exploited workers from developing countries had led mass protest action in solidarity with workers' struggles in a developed industrialized nation" (Lambert and Webster 2001, 344).

However, an action had taken place previously in February 1986, where 3M workers in South Africa took mass action in support of victimized 3M workers in Freehold, New Jersey. See Associated Press 1986. Peter Rachleff (2015: 132) expands on this account—although suggesting the action had taken place in 1985 instead of 1986—reporting the visit of Amon Msane, a shop steward from South Africa's Commerical, Catering and Allied Workers Union at 3M's Johannesburg plant, with UAW Local 879 at the St. Paul, Minnesota Ford Truck Assembly Plant. I heard Msane speak at a labor program in the San Francisco Bay Area sometime around late 1985/early 1986.

32. This continuum of motivations would seem to apply to any solidarity relationship, within or across political community boundaries.

33. This is the understanding with which Featherstone (2012, 4) approaches his study of solidarity: "This is a book about the *creation* of solidarities from below" (emphasis added).

34. Herod (2003, 513–514) discusses Rebecca Johns's concept of "accomodationist" international solidarity, where some workers use international solidarity to protect their privileged position within "the global spatial dimension of labor." See Johns 1998. Bieler (2014, 121) discusses this self-interest. Featherstone (2012) does not consider this in his nonetheless very innovative study.

I have long opposed the foreign policy program of the AFL-CIO (see Scipes 1989, 2000b, 2010a, 2010b, 2012), including the work of its Solidarity Center, arguing that its labor imperialism has been an impediment to developing international labor solidarity. However, as I wrote in my 2014a article (page 153, note 2), I now recognize that there are some cases where the AFL-CIO might be playing a helpful role, and refer to writings by Armbruster-Sandoval 2013, Kumar and Mahoney 2014, Rahman and Langford 2014, and even some evidence from my own work: Scipes 2010a, 73, 218, notes 12 and 13. See especially Timothy Ryan 2016, but some of the Solidarity Center's work in Mexico is mentioned in Bacon 2016. However, I remain skeptical about the motivations of the AFL-CIO leadership and refer to writings by Michael Barker (2011), G. Nelson Bass (2012), and Ronald W. Cox and Bass (2012) and hope others will examine this issue in much more detail. (See Scipes 2014a, 153, note 2, for further discussion.)

Nonetheless, I also write (2014a, 153, note 2), "[W]hile I'm glad to know they are doing some things in some places that are progressive or at least not totally detrimental, as long as the Solidarity Center is integrally tied to the National Endowment for Democracy—see Scipes, 2010a: 96–105—then the charge of engaging in labor imperialism, regarding the overall program, remains."

35. Featherstone (2012, 1) argues the "classic" case of solidarity is the support given to the Union by British textile workers during the US Civil War. These workers—inspired by the writings

and speeches of the escaped slave Frederick Douglass, who had traveled and spoken widely in England—opposed their own government's support for slavery and the cotton import trade, even though "Between November 1861 and November 1862, full-time employment in the Lancashire cotton industry fell by over 300,000" due to this being "a direct product of the cotton blockade of the Southern states by forces loyal to the Union." Actions such as this are what are being called "altruistic" solidarity.

36. This is not to criticize the workers or the union for making the decision to drop their boycott; it remains a high point of international labor solidarity in the United States with the workers of South Africa during their struggles against apartheid. Cole (2013) reports that Nelson Mandela specifically saluted these longshore workers and thanked them during his 1990 visit to Oakland after he had been released from prison. It is used simply to point out that there are limits as to how long or how far altruistic solidarity can be extended in any situation.

37. "Organizationally, the heart of a labor movement are trade unions and agglomerations of trade unions that are joined by a labor center which, in turn, works to further unify and strengthen the member unions. The number of labor centers vary by country: some countries, such as Australia, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, each have one labor center; other countries, such as Brazil, France, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, and Sweden, each have at least two different labor centers, if not more. In the US context, but using international labor terminology, the AFL-CIO is a 'labor center'" (Scipes 2001, 4).

38. During the summer of 2014, ILWU Local 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area refused to work ships carrying goods for the Israeli-owned Zim Lines. Because this appears to be different—Local 10 members seem to be responding to community efforts, rather than initiating them—this is seen as a different situation than the earlier boycotts. See Scipes 2014c.

39. Featherstone (2012) refers to this generally with the term "subaltern" solidarities.

40. For SIGTUR, see Dobrusin 2014; for an earlier piece that focuses on the first ten years of SIGTUR's development, see Lambert and Webster 2001.

41. New research is currently being done on this network. For previous work on the efforts by European dockworkers, see Fitz (1990), Waterman (1990; 1998, 79–110), and Weir (2004, 153–163).

42. After this was written initially, I became aware that several labor organizations in the United States have also decided to support the BDS campaign. At its 74th national convention in August 2015, the United Electrical workers (UE) became the first national union in the United States to adopt the BDS program. In the article about this, I learned also that UAW Local 2865, with 13,000 graduate student workers at the University of California, had previously endorsed the BDS campaign in December 2014. See Vasquez 2015. At its Biennial Constitutional Convention in 2015, the Connecticut AFL-CIO adopted a resolution supporting the BDS campaign. See Connecticut AFL-CIO 2015.

43. Waterman (1998, 132–136) discusses the work of the PWSC as well as others in support of the KMU, which gives some idea of their work, but his extreme bias against the KMU (as discussed below) requires reading his account very critically.

44. As technology advances, it becomes more difficult to place activities into different types. For example, while writing about regional or global networks, they obviously communicate between organizations within their respective network. Some global networks (such as SIGTUR) do not communicate widely outside of their networks; some communicate widely outside (Asia Monitor Resource Centre); and some communicate widely while trying to build their networks through episodic conferences or assemblies (Labor Start / Union Book; Australia Asia Worker Links). So, it becomes more and more difficult to differentiate between

organizational networks and communication networks, and I'm not sure that it is necessary except, perhaps, for intellectual analysis of their respective activities.

45. I served as the North American representative to *ILR* from 1984 to 1989; published in *NILS* (Scipes 1989); and then worked and studied with Peter Waterman, founder and editor of *NILS*, in 1990–1991, while attending graduate school at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, The Netherlands.

46. There are very many people who have written or have otherwise contributed to building global labor solidarity through their artistry. Obviously, there are those whose work I cite. However, there are others, some I know and many whom I don't. Accordingly, I've decided not to try to list everyone in this section who deserves to be mentioned because I'm afraid I will unfairly miss many.

47. Much of the academic literature has limited itself to trade-union internationalism. For example, Andreas Bieler (2014, 123), focuses on "the fundamental dynamics of exploitation" in his latest article. He is writing from a Marxist viewpoint. I see that viewpoint as being too limited, and argue for a much broader and inclusive approach; see also Van der Walt 2014.

48. In the above quote, the term "social movement unions" was mentioned. This term has been used in many confusing ways over the years, leading to intellectual confusion and theoretical disembowelment. For my effort to disentangle the intellectual goulash, to return the power of the conceptualization, and to understand how progressive unions in the contemporary United States should be understood, see Scipes 2014d.

49. For a theoretically sophisticated account of a victorious struggle by workers in Colombia, see Novelli 2011.

50. I argue there is a lot to be learned from the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU—May First Movement) Labor Center of the Philippines. Waterman and I have had strong disagreements over who controls the KMU: the Communist Party of the Philippines (Waterman 1998: 125–127) or the members (Scipes 1996). I am the only one who has done an in-depth nationwide study of the KMU, and I argue that the KMU has developed a new type of trade unionism (similar to COSATU [Congress of the South African Trade Unions] and CUT [Central Única dos Trabalhadores] of Brazil in previous years), referred to theoretically as "social-movement unionism." For my latest thinking on this, and comparing it to progressive unionism in North America, see Scipes 2014d. The KMU, a democratically controlled, member-run labor center, has created a new organizational structure that combines both vertical (hierarchical) and horizontal networks; has fostered widespread rank-and-file education; has fashioned ongoing relationships with sectoral organizations of peasants, women, students, urban poor, etc., which has led to the development of powerful "people's strikes"; and has established a conscious program to build international labor solidarity, including a unique annual program where unions and workers are invited to visit the Philippines to learn from their experiences. See Scipes 2014b/2016; see also Scipes 2015a.

51. The one situation where this claim might be challenged is when a corporation attempts to close down a production operation in one country (say, in a "developed" country) to move to another (say, in a "developing" country) in its ongoing efforts to increase its rate of profit. In this situation, jobs are at stake in two different countries, not just one. I think one strategy would be to fight for the jobs threatened in the developed country but not to fight to retain more than those threatened, allowing jobs to be created in the "receiving" country. Should those threatened jobs be "lost" by the developed country workforce, then the fight should be to ensure workers who lose their jobs maintain full wages and benefits until each worker reaches retirement age, and then receives pension benefits comparable to the rest of the workforce with jobs; certainly with the enhanced profitability from the new operations, the corporation could

afford to take care of released workers.

In any case, it is incumbent on the "losing" workforce *not* to blame job loss on workers in other countries, as they do not make the disinvestment/reinvestment decisions: corporate management does. The blame should be put on management, not other workers. See Scipes 2006.

52. Obviously, there can easily be overlap here, but I'm trying to pull these apart for analytical purposes. These are references that are considered to be important. For a larger, more complete list of articles regarding "global labor solidarity," which is periodically updated, see "Global Labor Solidarity from the Grassroots and Formal Labor Organizations" online at http://faculty.pnc.edu/kscipes/LaborBib.htm#Grassroots.

53. For an interesting discussion of the geographies of space in affecting such organization, see Herod 2003. For a discussion of "Labor Activism [by US unions] Before NAFTA," see Stillerman 2003, 582–586; for other forms of cross-border solidarity efforts against NAFTA (solidarity groups, church-initiated projects), and during the same time period, see Stillerman 2003, 586–589.

Down the road, researchers may want to separate out maritime workers' solidarity—and specifically, that of port workers—from this type, as there is something unique about maritime workers. Further research is needed to determine the desirability of this.

54. In my book, *AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers*, I explicate the AFL and then the AFL-CIO's labor imperialism, beginning in the early 1900s, where top-level labor "leaders" have actively worked to dominate labor movements in other countries (Scipes 2010a). Besides an extensive bibliography in general, in chapter 3, I discuss efforts by workers within US unions and their efforts to counter these reactionary projects and to build international labor solidarity—see Scipes 2010a, 69–76. In my 2010b article, I theorize this labor imperialism. In my 2012 article, I show theoretically how labor activists have joined together to challenge the AFL-CIO foreign policy program. And in my 2015b encyclopedia article on "labour imperialism," I pull these aspects into a coherent whole.

55. Although recognizing the weakness of the NAFTA labor side accord, Stillerman (2003, 592) points out, "The alliances both prior to and during the NAFTA fight would endure into initial efforts to file grievances under the NAFTA labor side accord and subsequent mobilizations against the Multilateral Accord on Investments (MAI) and the WTO." I would also add that this knowledge has also been used to challenge "free trade" projects in general. This point has strongly been made by Kay 2015.

Williams's (2003) article is a very detailed and very useful in-depth account of the struggle at Han Young plant in Tijuana that points out that, despite activist development of their campaigns, the complexity of cases may work against them. This article deserves attention.

Chapter 2

1. There are numerous examples of hegemonic ideas and social relations that serve capital. They include racism, white supremacy, nationalism, and numerous other ideas that sustain feelings of competition between workers on an international scale.

2. Examples of this are their role in the Colombo Plan, their support for NATO and for the colonization of Palestine (see Nastovski 2014).

3. Underlying this strategy was support for the prosperity and expansion of US companies and, thus, often US imperialist projects as well.

4. While Old Left activists were always involved in doing international solidarity, this became a very central piece of many New Left organizations, whether they were involved in work against US imperialism in Vietnam or supporting fledgling socialist governments and

liberation struggles. In Canada, a considerable number of activists decided to enter the labor movement to develop this work. These New Left activists helped to bolster the diminished presence of old leftists whose presence in the union became marginal or entirely quashed in various locals and regions since the mid-1940s. Roussopoulos notes that the New Left emerged in Canada with the nuclear disarmament movement in the late 1950s and was associated with the rise of student and youth activism, which focused on doing grassroots organizing (Roussopoulos 2006, 39–45). There were also strong currents in the New Left that tied the struggle against capitalism to the necessity for the liberation of women, black, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual communities.

The rise of the New Left was important in challenging the climate of repression inside and outside the labor movement, and created new openings to battle the Cold War victors inside the labor movement over the direction and nature of labor internationalism.

5. Editor's Note: The author conducted over twenty interviews with activists, mainly in the labor movement but some outside, in Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario during 2011 and 2012 in the process of conducting research for this part of her dissertation. These are listed as "anonymous," so are not publicly available. Accordingly, I made a decision to delete references herein to these specific anonymous interviews, and simply refer to these as "interviews." However, it must be noted that most of the information she developed from interviews came at least from more than one source, and oftentimes, from many sources. — KS.
6. For more about the South African Congress of Trade Unions, see Luckhardt and Wall 1980.
7. While I mention the Quebec labor movement to give some of the broader context, I do not get into an analysis of Quebec labor internationalism in this period. This is because of the substantively different climate within the Quebec labor movement in this period tied to the rise of Quebec left nationalism. There were also significant moves to reinvent labor internationalism in Quebec at this time. For instance, the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN), a conservative Catholic union set up in 1921, made serious strides to build international solidarity as part of their reinvention as a secular and radical union in the 1960s (see Güntzel 1993; Mills 2010).
8. An important document framed by this approach is the booklet produced by the newly established Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) National International Solidarity Committee in the late 1980s (1987). This booklet was a guide for locals and councils to set up relationships with other unions and workers organizations internationally.
9. "New Labor Internationalism" often describes grassroots models of international labor solidarity that connect to social movements and have sprung up since the 1960s but mostly in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. While aspects of this term fit and are useful for understanding elements of the worker-to-worker model, I think "grassroots internationalism" encompasses more than this, including a wider array of strategies existing in different eras. I think that this connection to older models emerging from radical left parties and workers' organizations is an important one to draw.
10. I draw this notion of the radical countercurrent inside the labor movement from Richard Hyman (1975).
11. Definitions of business unionism vary. Business unionism as an ideology accepts capitalism and is associated with cooperative relations with employers (Scott 1978a). Kim Scipes defines business unionism as a form of economic trade unionism limited to gaining benefits for a particular set of workers rather than for the broader working class (Scipes 2003). Business unionism as an ideology and practice is one of the central explanations for labor imperialism (Scipes 2010a, ch. 1; Scott 1978a; Sims 1992; Thomson and Larson 1978). Jack Scott connects

business unionism to labor imperialism, noting that once trade unionists adopted business unionism, they tied themselves to the fate of their employers and the interests of national capital, which translated into support for imperialism (Scott 1978a). Many also cite business unionism as a significant obstacle to various kinds of efforts to transform unions and build worker resistance.

12. This did not mean that all those involved in building this movement identified with the radical left or with class-struggle unionism. Some activists adopted this approach based on the democratic ethos of the New Left that was an important current in this era but were committed social democrats.

13. The Workers' Unity League, set up in 1929 by the Communist Party of Canada, was a union federation that organized unemployed, semiskilled and unskilled workers (see Endicott 2011; Manley 1994). The One Big Union was a revolutionary industrial union formed in 1919 (see Leier 1990; Peterson 1981).

14. This includes its potential to transform political landscapes, social and economic relations, the practice of particular actors themselves, and the way they think through their own location, relation to others, sense of agency, and understanding of social change inclusive of what constitutes effective union strategies and tactics.

15. There are numerous differences between the New Left in Canada and that in the United States. One difference is the prominence of nationalism among the Canadian New Left. Also, the turn to the working class in the United States did not translate into significant efforts at building international labor solidarity inside unions until a bit later; Johns dates the rise of significant international labor solidarity in the United States as beginning in the late 1970s (Johns 1998).

16. This approach, emanating from revolutionary left politics, posits the source of worker emancipation is within workers themselves and their ability to act.

17. This was also true of the South African work. The SSC organized and facilitated meetings and educationals with thousands of workers across the country throughout the 1980s (Freeman 1997, 140–141, 354; Luckhardt 2006, 14; Saul 2010; Southall 1994, 177).

18. Features of international events themselves deepened and strengthened this organizing. For instance, the huge migration of Chilean refugees after the coup in 1973 had a major impact in many cities and towns (interviews).

19. By "continentalist," I refer to the forces inside the labor movement that sought closer ties with the United States and US unions. I put this in quotation marks because like the idea of "international" unions, Canadian and American continentalism is a misnomer since it excludes Mexico.

20. Unlike in the American New Left, left nationalism was a formidable force in Canadian and Quebecois New Left organizations (and was also prominent among some Old Left parties) and became significant in shaping the politics of the student and labor movements in both places. The left nationalism of dominant strands of Old and New Left forces was a significant feature of the militancy of this period. The nationalist feature of the rise of the New Left in Canada and Quebec meant that they developed analyses distinct from those in many parts of Europe and the United States. These analyses often placed national sovereignty as critical to the overall class struggle and a prerequisite for a socialist Canada/Quebec (Palmer 2009).

    The nationalist thrust on the left was nothing new. It had been a current in the Communist Party of Canada (Ryan 1975) and other Old Left formations and was common among other communist parties and liberation struggles globally in this period, becoming especially pronounced after the dissolution of the Comintern. While many of the activists interviewed for this project would not identify as left nationalists, this was a wider significant force inside the

labor movement at this time and part of particular political battles, strikes, and part of internal efforts to reenvision struggle goals, possible strategies, etc.

21. This was not just limited to the level of particular workplace struggles. Left nationalism became a substantive force in the labor movement in Canada in this era. Miriam Smith (1992) argues that the CLC shifted from continentalism to economic nationalism in the mid-1970s.

    This happened for several reasons. One was the rise of US ownership. High notes that foreign ownership in manufacturing, mostly US-based, rose from 38 percent in 1926 to 54 percent in 1963 (High 2001, 201). Two, the popularity of left nationalism among the many New Left forces coupled with the New Left's "turn to the working class" in the 1970s meant many of these activists began workplace or union organizing. Three, the role of international unions, still the majority in the early 1970s, in barring or intervening in Canadian strikes and other workplace actions to quell militancy as well as their sometimes undemocratic, conservative, and bureaucratic structures. Joan Sangster argues that for many left labor activists, Canadian unions were smaller and more autonomous, making them potentially more militant and more democratic (Sangster 2006, 60). Many New Left activists worked within their unions to break from US unions or to support the development of Canadian unions, and some were also active in building an alternative left nationalist Canadian labor federation, the Confederation (previously Council) of Canadian Unions (CCU) (Sangster 2006, 43).

22. According to David McNally, for Innis, "the trade relation with a metropolitan centre structures the pattern of economic development in a country like Canada" because of the centrality of economic activity focused on the extraction and export of unprocessed materials to the metropolitan centre (McNally 1981). Kellogg sums up Frank's theory of the dependency relationship. Firstly, the global economic order is a set of hierarchal chains between metropolis and satellites. Secondly, central to this relation is the extraction of surplus from the satellite by the metropolis. And thirdly, as a result, the satellites could never develop economically and politically to the level of the metropolis (Kellogg 1989, 343).

23. See Kellogg (1989) and McNally (1991) for more on the problems of applying this theory to the Canadian context.

24. However, it is important to note that for Mohanty, the forging of mutuality happens across difference rather than arising from likeness (Mohanty 2003, 7). Mohanty argues for a conception of solidarity as standing with another over and against a third allows us to see solidarity as a communicative process toward constructing a basis for connection over and against differences (Mohanty 2003, 7).

25. US labor imperialism also was part of the rationale for breaking from US unions and for developing spaces for local control over internationalism.

26. The Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) was a predecessor federation to the CLC; it merged with the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) in 1956 to form the CLC. Like the merger of the AFL and CIO that took place the year before, the TLC was predominantly made up of craft unions (like the AFL), and the CCL by industrial unions (like the CIO).

27. It is important to note that for some international unions, international policy was the purview of the American leadership of the union.

28. An example of this is the work in support of the revolution in Cuba (see Wright 2009).

29. The direct challenge to the CLC's international practices also took the form of exposing some of the problematic aspects of their policies and practices historically. The Saskatoon Solidarity Committee pamphlet is one such document that circulated among left circles, bookstores, and between solidarity organizations and was sold at union conventions. Two other important pieces from this time were Jack Scott's book *Yankee Unions: Go Home!* and Thomson and Larson's *Where Were You Brother? An Account of Trade Union Imperialism.*

30. In some cases, the support of leadership was a significant factor in expanding the work and gaining the political capital to fight. An example of this was the work of the SACTU Solidarity Committee (SSC). Winning the support of the leadership of the Canadian UAW and the Toronto CUPW local was essential for building the base, politically and materially, to carry out their work. Other groups won leadership support of particular unions and built bases within the local to do this work and to expand the work to local councils and provincial federations.

    A further impetus for this approach was the desire to get lower- and mid-level leadership to take on this work in their unions. For instance, in the case of organizing delegations to Nicaragua, often targeting local presidents or other low- or mid-level leaders who were seen as having more capacity to develop solidarity work in their locals upon return was important (interviews).

31. In English, the name of this union is the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU).

32. An early example of this was in Quebec in CSN, where a committee was set up in 1970 to do member-run international labor solidarity.

33. "Free trade" was put in quotation marks because it essentially is a charter for the rights of corporations and not what is classically known in economic theory as free trade.

34. Luis M. Pozo (2007, 55) argues that nationalism is a mechanism of class accommodation in that it renders the reality of class divisions politically irrelevant by stressing the "organic" unity of dominant and dominated. Pozo argues that Gramsci's interest in national unity in Italy "prevented him from realizing that if the nation-people represented a hegemonic principle characteristic of bourgeois hegemony, then they could hardly form the basis for non-bourgeois hegemonic projects" (Pozo 2007, 57). A similar critique was raised against Canadian left nationalism by Steve Moore and Debi Wells in 1975, who argued that nationalism only operates to obscure "antagonistic class divisions between Canadian capitalists and workers" (Kellogg 1989, 338).

35. There are many examples of this starting from the 1960s. One example is the CAW. For more, see Gindin 1989, 1995; Yates, 1990.

Chapter 3

1. It is not my intention to argue that international solidarity is always a rational strategy for unions: workers in different parts of the world do not necessarily share the same interests but can, at least on a short-term level, have opposite interests. Especially in a context of employers' strategies of pitting workers at different worksites against each other, the pursuit of local strategies can hence be more rational in defending workers' "spatial" (as opposed to "class") interests (Herod 2003).

2. This does not mean that nation-states are disappearing. They remain crucial actors in political, social, and economic developments. However, in the contemporary world, many economic, social, political, or cultural processes are no longer solely defined by the "containers" of nation-states but extend beyond national boundaries (see, for example, Pries 2010).

3. Many definitions of the term "transnational" exist. Portes et al. (1999) suggest that in order for the term "transnational migrant" not merely to be a substitute for the older term "immigrant," "transnationalism" should be delimited to "occupations and activities that require *regular and sustained* social contacts *over time* across national borders for their implementation" (219, emphasis added).

4. For exceptions, see Bieler 2005; Herod 2003; Hyman 1999; Johns 1998; Scipes 2014a; Zeuner 2004.

5. Obviously, successful cases of strategic cross-border collaboration between unions not involving a significant emotional basis exist, such as strategic corporate campaigns targeting

specific global employers. However, such alliances are mostly directed at the attainment of short- or medium-term goals and rarely result in the establishment of stable, long-term solidary relationships.

6. However, significant exceptions exist, such as the transnational grassroots network TIE (Transnational Information Exchange), the KMU Labor Center's International Solidarity Affair, the close alliance between the US United Electrical Workers (UE) and the Mexican Frente Auténtico del Trabajo (FAT), among many others (for example, Kay 2011; Köhnen 2013; Scipes 2000a, 2015a).

7. Obviously, exceptions exist, as unions in many southern European countries, as well as the existence of smaller left-wing unions in many other countries, prove. Also, in the context of revitalization strategies, even large unions in the United States have begun to take up broader issues such as immigration reform.

8. Most labor unions are typically not at the forefront of organizing immigrants and other minorities. Given the always partly exclusive nature of solidarity (Hoffmann 1992; Zeuner 2004), unions have historically often tried, and many still do, to exclude migrants in order to protect their membership from low-wage competition. However, in recent decades, forced by their sheer numbers, unions in many migration-destination countries have begun targeting migrant workers in organizing campaigns.

9. Despite the opening of many US unions toward migrants in the late 1980s and 1990s, migrants are still underrepresented at the higher leadership levels; they are mostly found at the lower leadership and staff levels and in the broader membership.

10. Exact numbers on migrant membership are difficult to obtain, as unions seldom collect these data.

11. However, not all Salvadoran USWW members were supporters of the guerrillas: in fact, a considerable number had been on the side of the military before migrating. Since they are rarely willing to admit it openly, however, it is difficult to know exact numbers.

12. Interview with former USWW organizer, Los Angeles, November 13, 2013. Interview in Spanish, translation by the author, who is a native Spanish speaker.

13. Interview with a Salvadoran-origin rank-and-file leader, USWW, Los Angeles, November 14, 2013. Author's translation.

14. Interestingly, none of the interview partners expressed any criticism regarding the FMLN, despite their not-so-radical-anymore politics since the electoral victory in 2009.

15. After seventy years of government of the PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional—Institutional Revolutionary Party), official Mexican unions are strongly interlinked with the party and are mostly undemocratic and corrupt. Most do not represent workers' interests; in fact, workers are often not even aware of their presence, as in the case of the numerous company unions and so-called protection contracts.

16. However, they were interested in participating in the worker-to-worker exchange to a somewhat lesser degree than in the rest of the solidarity work: many workers have reservations about participating in trips to Mexico, as they imply being away from the family for a week or more and require their employer's permission.

17. Interview with the personal assistant to the district director, Chicago, January 29, 2014.

18. In fact, migrants' language skills allow for a large share of the communication in the alliance to be in Spanish, which is remarkable given that most international work involving US unions is carried out in English.

19. Interview with first-generation Mexican USW member, Chicago, January 24, 2014.

20. El Rescate and the Central American Resource Center (originally the Central American Refugee Center), founded in the early 1980s by different factions of the FMLN, are two of the

most important political groups of exiled Salvadorans in the United States. Besides assisting Salvadoran refugees in settlement and asylum issues, both have focused on the Salvadoran exile community's political education, mainly on the civil war and on building FMLN support networks among the community and beyond (Landolt 2008; see also Sarmiento 2011). The situation has changed since the peace accords in 1992, but many groups still maintain ties to the FMLN and continue to organize political support for what is now a political party.

21. Salvadoran president from 2009 to 2014.

22. Interview with staff person, USWW, November 20, 2013. Author's translation.

23. Interview with Sergio Salinas, Seattle, December 9, 2013. The interview was held in Spanish, translation by the author.

Chapter 4

1. There is an intense debate regarding the characteristics of South American governments as "left." Some consider them all too different to include in a same grouping and divide them according to moderates and radicals (Robinson 2008; Boron 2013); others defy that distinction (Garcia 2008). In this chapter, the central focus is not dividing the governments between moderates and radicals, but rather asserting the fact that there was a change in governments, and a shift from a model of state retrenchment—during neoliberalism—to one of active state participation in the main areas of political, social, and economic life (Natanson 2008). An update on the discussion regarding the depth of the reforms is much needed, but it is not the central issue for this chapter. For a very recent discussion, see Ellner ed. 2014.

2. Peronism and PRI-ism are considered part of the wave of political movements—many times referred to as "populism"—that came to power in Latin America from the 1930s onward and have remained dominant forces in national politics. An essential characteristic of these forces is that they have engaged popular organizations, especially labor, as a central component of the governing alliance. Peronism is the result of the election into government of General Juan Domingo Perón in 1945, creating a political force that placed centrality on national development and wealth redistribution. Peronism underwent significant changes throughout the decades, while still remaining as the main political force in Argentina today. PRI-ism is a reference to the political movement based on the Party of the Institutional Revolution (Partido Revolucionario Institucional), which has dominated Mexican politics since the institutionalization of the 1910 revolution. Similarly to Peronism, PRI-ism has undergone significant changes, oscillating between a developmental state-led model from the 1930s until the 1970s and a neoliberal economic policy from the 1980s onward. For further comparisons and detailed analysis, see Berins Collier and Collier 1991.

3. The debate around "social-movement unionism" is certainly necessary today. Due to space limitations, it is understood herein as a type of unionism that engages in demands and mobilizes for issues beyond the "conventional" matters for trade unions and that seek to challenge the social order. This includes issues beyond the workplace and that affect society as a whole—privatization, precarious work, education and health system, foreign debt, economic dependency—and the inclusion of alliances with social movements as a fundamental element in their practice. Even though many of the unions that were originally considered social-movement unions have experienced setbacks and changes, they remain an alternative to a type of unionism that focuses solely on work-related issues. The debate can be further found in the original works of Kim Scipes (1992a, 1992b) and in his recent publication (Scipes 2014d), where he argues that we should not confuse social-movement unionism (that has appeared to date only in the South), even with its contradictions, with efforts by a few unions in North America.

4. China has certainly had a role in promoting the Commodities Consensus and investing in infrastructure, since it is the largest world market for these products. The role of Chinese banks in financing development projects (Gallagher, Irwin, and Koleski 2012) presents a clear example of the intervention of Chinese interest. Furthermore, China has also led a political push for signing trade agreements with the region (Slipak 2014), which poses a similar problematic as with the United States' presence. In this model of development, South America is positioned in a "comparative advantage" model in which the sole role is to provide raw materials for the industrialized countries.

Chapter 5

1. This and many other interviews were conducted by the Solidarity Center staff in Dhaka, November 2013, and are available on its website: www.solidaritycenter.org.
2. "Fire-related incidents" means that workers were injured both by fires and by the perception of fires and danger, resulting in stampedes and trampling of workers because they feared their lives were in imminent danger. There have also been five explosions and two further building collapses, which added to the total number of killed and injured in the figures above.
3. Bangladeshi press and worker reports collected by Solidarity Center Dhaka office; not all fire and fire-related events are reported in the press.
4. Solidarity Center / Dhaka report, culled from reports from the BBC News, Reuters, and the *Dhaka Tribune*, January 31, 2015.
5. Subsequent collapses of factory structures in Cambodia injured dozens more workers. The fire at Ali Enterprises in Karachi, Pakistan, also killed nearly three hundred workers and together with the Bangladesh disasters makes up three out of the four worst-ever industrial disasters in the garment industry's history (AFL-CIO 2014, 37). [Editor's note: On May 14, 2015, seventy-two workers were killed in a factory fire in Valenzuela, Manila, Philippines.] If the Triangle Shirtwaist immolation in 1911 that killed over one hundred women workers was the genesis of organizing the garment industry in the United States, these disasters should be the same for Bangladeshi workers and workers in other countries to organize and advance safety in this brutalizing global system.
6. Statistics from the Joint Directorate of Labor (JDL) of the Bangladesh Ministry of Labor, and estimate by Alonzo Suson, country program director, Solidarity Center / Dhaka. This figure is literally changing every week as of this writing.
7. Figures from the Bangladesh Ministry of Labor's Joint Directorate of Labor, May 2015.
8. These include the Bangladesh Independent Garment Worker Union Federation (BIGUF), the Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWF), the Bangladesh Federation of Worker Solidarity (BFWS), the National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF), and the Bangladesh National Garment Workers Employment League (BNGWEL), among others.
9. By a "militant ideological base," I am referring to a union that has a set of values in its constitution and practice that have identifiable ideological elements or aspects, such as policy statements relevant to the socioeconomic picture in a given country, as opposed to unions that have a political base (BNP or Awami League fronts) that mouth the statements of the political parties (which in Bangladesh also have precious little real ideological ideas and policies).
10. In the case of Ali Enterprises in Karachi, the auditing firm Social Accountability 8000 had certified the factory safe and within compliance of its standards just three weeks before the deadly fire (AFL-CIO 2014, 4).
11. Opinions differ on this. One could argue that the pattern and reaction of brands, companies, and governments to intense campaigns do change the landscape upon which the next campaign

can build awareness and outrage. Other long-term campaigners are more skeptical and suggest the brands just fight a rear-guard public relations battle (Clifford and Greenhouse 2013).

The excellent overview of how factory "compliance" regimes are failing to protect the world's most vulnerable workers leaves out one important fact: the opportunity cost of "corporate social responsibility." Starting in the late 1980s, thousands of American consumers joined anti-sweatshop campaigns that represented the world's first coordinated response to contracting-out manufacturing. These cross-border solidarity campaigns were neutered by cynical apparel brands and the politicians espousing a maximalist "free trade" agenda; NGOs, foundations, academics, and even unions were seduced by promises of robust monitoring to protect cheated and abused workers. We now see that when the vigorous "street heat" inevitably atrophied, those workers were left on their own again (e-mail communication to the *New York Times* Letters to the Editor, Jeffrey Ballinger, September 2, 2013).

12. According to the International Labor Rights Forum website,

> International Labor Rights Forum is a human rights organization that advocates for workers globally. Our core work is three-fold: 1. We hold global corporations accountable for labor rights violations in their supply chains. 2. We advance policies and laws that protect workers. 3. We strengthen workers' ability to advocate for their rights. ILRF works with trade unions, faith-based organizations, and community groups to support workers and their families. We lead on initiatives such as making apparel factories safe in Bangladesh; stopping the exploitation of children in the cotton fields of Uzbekistan; increasing the income of farm workers in the cocoa fields of West Africa; developing labor law clinics in China; and supporting threatened union leaders in Latin America's banana sector. (www.laborrights.org/about)

13. "A labor rights clause in the GSP was adopted by Congress and signed by President Ronald Reagan on October 30, 1984, taking effect in the GSP Renewal Act of 1984. From then on, a country's beneficial status under the GSP was linked to whether it was "taking steps to afford internationally recognized worker rights." The bill set forth the following five-part definition of such rights, which has been repeated many times in other US trade laws:
    1. the right of association;
    2. the right to organize and bargain collectively;
    3. a prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor;
    4. a minimum age for the employment of children; and,
    5. acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health (Compa and Vogt 2001)

14. For example, despite years of documentation of egregious forced child labor in the Uzbek cotton industry at the specific behest of the government, and a long-term pending GSP petition by ILRF, which the AFL-CIO supported, neither the Bush nor Obama administrations would suspend Uzbekistan's trade benefits because of its role as part of the Northern Distribution Network providing a channel for war materiel for the Afghan War. The GSP subcommittee that makes recommendations to the White House is composed of the USTR, various offices of the State Department, the Department of Labor, the Department of Treasury, and sometimes other agencies such as the Department of Agriculture and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). In my estimation, every agency was against renewing GSP benefits to Uzbekistan, except one, which did not even sit on the GSP subcommittee—the Department of Defense, which essentially "overruled" the other agencies. The decision on GSP lies within the executive branch.

15. Asian regional predecessor organization to the Solidarity Center.

16. "The Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) is an independent labor-rights monitoring organization conducting investigations of working conditions in factories around the globe. Its purpose is to combat sweatshops and protect the rights of workers who make apparel and other

products. The WRC conducts independent, in-depth investigations; issues public reports on factories producing for major brands; and aids workers at these factories in their efforts to end labor abuses and defend their workplace rights. The WRC has the support of more than 175 college and university affiliates, and its primary focus is the labor practices of factories that make university-related apparel" (www.workersrights.org/about/).

17. "The Clean Clothes Campaign is dedicated to improving working conditions and supporting the empowerment of workers in the global garment and sportswear industries. Since 1989, the CCC has worked to help ensure that the fundamental rights of workers are respected. We educate and mobilize consumers, lobby companies and governments, and offer direct solidarity support to workers as they fight for their rights and demand better working conditions. The Clean Clothes Campaign is an alliance of organizations in 16 European countries. Members include trade unions and NGOs covering a broad spectrum of perspectives and interests, such as women's rights, consumer advocacy and poverty reduction. We rely on a partner network of more than 200 organizations and unions in garment-producing countries to identify local problems and objectives, and to help us develop campaign strategies to support workers in achieving their goals. We cooperate extensively with similar labour rights campaigns in the United States, Canada, and Australia" (www.cleanclothes.org/about/who-we-are).
18. As of this writing, 202 brands have signed the accord. Unlike other agreements, it is legally binding on its members and is groundbreaking in that it has workers' unions and representatives, such as the global union federations IndustriALL and Union Network International (UNI), as signatories to the agreement. The agreement, for the first time, enshrines and obligates the consultation and significant involvement of trade unions in the implementation of improving labor rights in a sweeping obligation of international brands and the Bangladesh garment industry. For more information, go to www.bangladeshaccord.org.
19. Here is an excerpt from the remarks of Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which he gave to open a hearing on Bangladesh labor rights on February 11, 2014: "In my view, if the workers of Tazreen Fashions and Rana Plaza had been able to organize and represent their interests, they would still be alive today. Simply put, workers are the best guarantors of their own safety when given the right and ability to organize."
20. The ILO, for example, has also been in Bangladesh for decades and, as mentioned earlier, was instrumental in helping to eradicate systemic child labor from the garment industry in the early 1990s. But the ILO is a tripartite organization that also has to serve the interests of employers and governments, and thus its union partners are constrained by this as well as by political pressure on the ILO to work only with certain unions.
21. This, of course, is because 85 percent of the workers are women and they deserve and have earned a voice.
22. In 2010 prominent trade-union activists Babul Akter (president of BIGWF) and Kalpona Akter (director of the NGO Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity) were arrested on trumped-up charges, and Kalpona's NGO was deregistered. In April 2012 the BIGWF organizer, Aminul Islam, was kidnapped, tortured, and murdered. The government has not mounted a credible investigation as of this writing almost three years later. The latest manifestation of this violation of the rule of law and the impunity of foreign manufacturers is an attack on February 22, 2014, on four young organizers from the BFWS by two dozen Bangladeshi supervisors supported by people believed to have been hired to beat up the organizers by the Chunji Knit factory (a Korean-owned concern) employing 3,500 workers. Chunji, in violation of the law passed months earlier mandating an increase in the minimum

wage, had refused to pay workers their legal due. In the midst of a campaign to get the employer to obey Bangladeshi law, BFWS organizers signed up some three hundred workers to join the union and were violently attacked, landing in the hospital. Charges were subsequently filed not against the attackers, but against the workers who were attacked. Anti-union attacks began to escalate beginning in April 2014 and continued into 2015.

23. According to recent statistics gathered by Solidarity Center field staff in Burma and Bangladesh, despite being cut off from the global economy by decades of sanctions and repression, wages in Burma are actually beginning to rise higher in many cases than that of Bangladesh, a "beneficiary" of thirty years of global capitalism.

Chapter 6

1. This article was previously published in a journal titled *Class, Race and Corporate Power* in spring 2014 (Scipes, 2014b). Other than a few very minor editorial changes, this article has not been changed, and is based on research done between 1986 and 1994. In April and May 2015, I again traveled to the Philippines to update my research on KMU, but it was decided not to update this article herein, as this latest research was not sufficient to update all of the earlier research. My report on the 2015 ISA has been published (Scipes 2015a), although my research on the islands of Mindanao and Negros will be published in a subsequent article.
2. See chapter 1, this volume, for elaboration on this point.
3. Coming out of an international debate with long-time labor activists/scholars Peter Waterman, Eddie Webster, and Rob Lambert, I developed the most theoretically advanced definition of "social movement unionism" (SMU) (Scipes 1992a, 1992b).

   Completely unaware of this debate, Kim Moody (1997b)—basing his definition off the work of Gay Seidman (1994), who also was not involved in the international debate—applied SMU to North America, using the same term for a qualitatively different social phenomenon than that for which it had been initially developed. This has subsequently caused great confusion among labor writers.

   My article (Scipes 2014d) is an effort to untangle this confusion. I use my definition from the 2014d paper throughout this essay, and not Moody's.
4. This essay is the result of my research conducted during six trips to the Philippines between 1986 and 1994, and published in my subsequent book (Scipes, 1996). Because this book was published in the Philippines, very few labor researchers outside of the Philippines and Australia are familiar with it, and fewer have read it. Other than Lois West's (1997) book, there has been almost nothing published on the KMU since the late 1990s, meaning their efforts are all but unknown to many of today's researchers. All research reported herein is from the 1986–1994 period.
5. As I pointed out in my book (Scipes 1996, 22–23), Filipino workers chose the name "May First Movement" specifically to honor the marytrs of Chicago—who were hanged for their leadership in events leading to the Haymarket "Affair," which was a crucial development in the struggle for the eight hour day. See Roediger 1990. Because of the events in Chicago in 1886, workers around the world—the only exceptions being the United States and Canada, as far as I know—celebrate May Day as "International Workers' Day."
6. This section on the KMU is heavily based on Scipes 1996, 9–19.
7. Interview with KMU chairperson Crispin Beltran, May 2, 1990, in Manila. All interviews referred to herein were conducted by me in the course of my research on the KMU.
8. Interview with a member of KMU's International Department on April 16, 1990, in Manila. While KMU is the largest labor center in the country, it is still quite small in proportion to the number of workers in the society. In 1987, 40.76 percent of the labor force of 15.58 million

workers—9.06 million—was employed as wage/salary workers. “Of the wage/salary earners, 2.1 million or 23 percent were organized into unions, of which only 346 thousand worked under a collective bargaining agreement” (EILER 1988, 2). Nonetheless, KMU’s location in strategic parts of the economy and its alliances with other social movements give it a power considerably beyond its numerical size.

[In 1993, the KMU suffered splits on two different dimensions within the National Capital Region, which covers Metro Manila. While substantially weakened in this region, the rest of the national organization remained intact and was able to act, along with remaining organizations in the National Capital Region, both in regard to local and national political issues (see Scipes 1996, 227–245). These splits, however, do not detract from the argument herein.]

9. For details on how the largest union of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP)—a competing labor center established by the Marcos dictatorship, and supported with millions of dollars through the AFL-CIO’s regional organization, the Asian American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI)—challenged a KMU-affiliated local union for control over the workers at Atlas Mines in Cebu during the mid- to late 1980s, which included integral collaboration with a death squad (no exaggeration), see Scipes 1996, 116–125; a less detailed report is in Scipes 2010a, 48–56.

10. My research on the KMU played an important role in developing my theorization of “social movement unionism”; see Scipes 2014d.

11. For a discussion of how these organizational features could be beneficially utilized in North America, see Scipes 1990b.

12. Interview with George Aguilon, April 12, 1988, in Davao City. NAMAHMIN is a geographical alliance covering Davao City, and Davao del Sur and North Cotabato provinces, all on the big southern island of Mindanao.

13. Interview with Lucena Flores and Beda Villanueva, president and general secretary, respectively, of the United Workers of the Philippines, June 21, 1989, in Manila. Villanueva was also the president of the Greenfields Workers’ Union. [For an account of the interview, of which these quotations were only a part, see Scipes 1996, 84–87.] The leadership of the ULGWP had unilaterally and illegally disaffiliated from the KMU, without the permission of the National Executive Council. The majority of local unions then left the ULGWP, reunited in the United Workers of the Philippines, and re-affiliated with the KMU in early 1989.

14. For an interview with Cleofe Zapanta, secretary general of KMK, see Scipes 1990a. [For a discussion of KMK, see Scipes 1996, 75–84; Lois West (1997) also has considerable material on KMK.]

15. This approach is built off the work of the great Brazilian popular educator Paulo Freire (1984).

16. Interview in Manila in January 1986 with a person who requested that I not use his name.

17. Interview with the late Erasto “Nonoy” Librado, April 30, 1990, in Davao City.

18. For more complete details on the development of the KMU, see Scipes 1996. Another feature not included in this selection but an important part of the book are the chapters on women leaders and workers, both in their own women workers’ organization and within local unions and a national federation.

19. This section is taken from various sections of Scipes 2000a.

20. By September 1987, a published booklet “listed 118 different vigilante groups throughout the country,” referring to Dela Cruz, Jordan, and Emmanuel eds., 1987 (Scipes 1996, 59), and were first developed in Davao City. Extensive accounting of the violence directed against KMU and its members is provided throughout my book (Scipes 1996). Note “almost every

trade union leader I met had received a death threat by name from at least one of the vigilante organizations (that is, death squads) by 1988" (Scipes 1996, xvi).

21. To get more information, the KMU's website (in English and Tagalog) is at www.kilusangmayouno.org, and their organizational address is KMU, 63 Narra St., Barangay Claro, Project 3, 1102 Quezon City, Philippines. While I am impressed by the KMU, and think there is a lot to learn from its experiences, it is not perfect. I critically address a number of issues—including the KMU's ideology, the position of women within the KMU, bureaucracy within the KMU, and the KMU's national coalition work—as well as briefly discuss the KMU's international solidarity work in a chapter titled "Overview of the KMU" (Scipes 1996, 183–201). Further, I critically report and analyze the splits in the KMU, as well as subsequent developments (as of April 1994) in Scipes 1996, 219–247. Much of the material on ideology, women, and bureaucracy had been earlier published in Scipes 1992a, 147–58.

22. May 1, 2015, was the 35th anniversary of the founding of the KMU.

One comment from the 2015 trip: the KMU is not as strong as it was in the late 1980s/early 1990s, when the research reported herein was done. It has suffered a lot of repression, and a regional minimum wage bill passed in 1989 has allowed industry to disperse outside of Metro Manila, where the KMU's strength was centered; thus, dissipating its strength. Nonetheless, the KMU is recovering; its organization is largely intact, and its philosophy remains central to its practice. It remains one of the most developed and dynamic labor centers in the world. I believe there remains much to learn from its experiences.

Chapter 7

1. Readers can find a fuller development in my book, *The Children of NAFTA* (Bacon 2004), as well as in Zaragosa Vargas's *Labor Rights Are Civil Rights*.

Chapter 8

1. Recent attempts to pass comprehensive immigration reform through Congress with legislation that includes guest-worker programs and long waits for citizenship, supported by the AFL-CIO in alliance with the US Chamber of Commerce, have drawn criticism from David Bacon and others, who see AFL-CIO support for such policies as backsliding toward earlier anti-immigrant positions. See, for example, Bacon 2013.

2. However, the Solidarity Center and the AFL-CIO gave support to opponents of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez at the time of the short-lived coup against him in 2002 (Scipes 2010a, 56–68).

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He was a factory worker and union organizer for two decades, including several years with the United Farm Workers, the United Electrical Workers, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and others. Today he documents the changing conditions in the workforce, the impact of the global economy, war and migration, and the struggle for human rights. He belongs to the Pacific Media Workers Guild and the Communications Workers of America and was an organizer of the Bay Area Free South Africa Movement and the Labor Immigrant Organizers Network, as well as board chair of the Northern California Coalition for Immigrant Rights. Bacon's photography has been exhibited widely in the United States, Mexico, and Europe, and his photography and journalism have received multiple awards. *Illegal People* was awarded the CLR James Best Book Award for 2007–2008 by the Working Class Studies Association.

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in Chicago (2011–2015), serving on the national executive board of the union. Professor Scipes has published extensively on labor, both in the United States and in a number of different countries around the world. He spent three weeks in the Philippines in April–May 2015, participating in the Kilusang Mayo Uno's "International Solidarity Affair" and then traveling in rural Mindanao and Negros, conducting additional research.

Professor Scipes currently serves on several editorial boards: *WorkingUSA; Class, Race and Corporate Power; Green Social Thought;* and *Substancenews.net.* Active in the American Sociological Association's Labor and Labor Movement Section, he also served as an elected board member for the International Sociological Association's Research Committee 44 (Labor) from 2006 to 2010.

Michael Zweig is professor of economics and founding director of the Center for Study of Working Class Life at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, where he has received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. His most recent books are *The Working Class Majority: America's Best Kept Secret* (Cornell University Press 2000, 2nd edition 2012) and *What's Class Got to Do with It? American Society in the Twenty-First Century* (Cornell University Press 2004). In 2005–2006 he served as executive producer of Meeting Face to Face: The Iraq–US Labor Solidarity Tour. In 2009 he wrote, produced, and directed the film *Why Are We in Afghanistan?* In 2014 Professor Zweig received the Working-Class Studies Association Award for lifetime contributions to the field of working-class studies. Professor Zweig is active in his union, United University Professions (Local 2190, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO), representing thirty-four thousand faculty and professional staff throughout SUNY, and has served two terms on its state executive board. He represents United University Professions on the national steering committee of US Labor Against the War (USLAW) and is a national co-convener of USLAW.

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